# Secular, Social and Ethical Values in The Upanishads

# SECULAR, SOCIAL AND ETHICAL VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

**A positivistic study of the Upanishads accomplished during 1975-78 under the assignment of the University Grants Commission under the scheme for utilization of services of outstanding retired teachers.**



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Consecrated

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During the second quarter of the 20th century, who, by his Divine grace, infused me with Spiritual Inspiration and Philosphical interest which have sustained my inner existence for the last forty years of life since 1938.

*by his grateful disciple*

RAMANAND TIWARI

## A REQUEST TO SCHOLARS

The author requests learned scholars particularly to read Chapters I, II, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XXV, XXVI, XXXVI and to oblige the author with their comments upon the view presented by the auther in these chapters.

# Preface

The present work embodies a positivistic study of the Upanishads accomplished by me during three years from 1975 to 1978 under an assignment by the University Grants Commission within the scheme for utilization of services of outstanding teachers I have made a profitable use of the leisurely employment which the U.G C. afforded to me by this assignment after my retirement from the post of Professor of Philosophy, in Maharani Shree Jaya College, Bharatpur (Rajasthan). This assignment saved me from the sense of idleness and futility which usually overtakes a person after retiremnt from active service It also encouraged me to continue my interest in philosophical studies and ensured for me a sense of fruitful living at a time when a sense of futility of existence overtakes a person in a life hastening towards its end.

The subject chosen by me for this study afforded me an opportunity to fulfiil my long-cherished desire to present a positivistic view of the Upanishads, which I have been entertaining for the last forty years, eversince I translated into Hindi as a student of Allahabad University 'The Constructive Survey of the Upanishadic Philosophy' written by my great teacher in philosophy, Professor R D Ranade That Hindi translation has lately been published by Rajasthan Hindi Granth Academy, Jaipur in 1971.

I have been studying the Upanishads casually but keenly during these forty years My doctoral thesis on "The Ethics of Shankaracharya" provided me with a reason for a closer study of Upanishads alongwith the commentaries of Shankaracharya on them. I have tried to understand and interpret the Vedanta of Shankaracharya also, in my doctoral thesis, in a more positive manner than it is usually done by his followers and his interpre-

ters. I have tried to find a considerable ground for such a positive view of the Vedanta in the present study of the Upanishads.

The very title of the present study indicates a positive inclination towards the interpretation of the Upanishads. It seeks to discover 'secular, social and ethical values in the Upanishads' which are generally believed to have no significant place in the Vedanta of Upanishads If there is any mention of these values in the Upanishads, it is understood to be of no ultimate significance as these values are only regarded as a provisional concession to the ignorant and have no final importance in the Vedantic view of reality. According to this view Brahman is the ultimate reality and it is said to be 'one without a second' so as to leave no place of importance for values that belong to the world of duality and diversity. The Upanishadic view of life is understood to be ascetic and monistic The secular and social values have no importance in such a view. The ethical values also are inconsistent with the nature of reality as they are temporal, dynamic and dualistic Time and activity signify movement, change and mutation. Hence they have no place in Brahman which is immutable. The temporal and dynamic have no real relation with the eternal and immutable.

The present study of the Upanishads is rather unconventional in so far as it presents a view of the Upanishads which is considerably different from prevalent view of Vedanta believed to be maintained by Shankaracharya and his followers, and after them by scholars of the Vedanta in India and the West. All these persons believe that the Upanishads propound a strict monism and ascetism in which there is little room for a genuine value of secular objects, social relations and ethical virtues. They are understood to contain the germs of the theory of maya according to which the world is an illusory creation which disappears in the dazzling light of spiritual realization and is of no ultimate importance. Individuality is an illusion which is dissolved in the deluge of spiritual enlightenment even as rivers lose their identity in the ocean.

As different from the view indicated above, I have maintained and tried to support by evidence from the texts of the Upanishads that the world is not unreal or illusory according to the Upanishads and the secular, social, and ethical values have due importance in them They share in the nature of reality and are sustained by it The sensory pleasures are of course passing and body is destructible in death. But the reality of these values is axiological and not ontological This value is derived from the Supreme Spirit which is the Supreme Reality All values derive thier axiological status from it. If man's attitude in life ignores the supreme spiritual reality which sustains all these values and takes these values in abstraction these values lose all value. Life then is deprived of all meaning and happiness Such situations come before some persons, though normally parental love endows every child with some blessing of spiritual non-duality. This gift of bliss sustains every man in life, as the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has indicated (4-3-32) The value of other values depends on the extent to which they are integrated with the supreme spiritual reality which abounds in bliss

The world and worldly values are not ontologically unreal, but axiologically illusory i e valueless for man, when axiological support of supreme spirit is extremely lacking in his attitude to life The ontological being of values will be found to be axiologically meaningless Metaphysically the supreme spirit is the ultimate support of world and life Axiologically it is the source of all value. Ethically it is the goal of life. The Isha Upanishad urges in its first verse that the objects of the world are to be viewed in axiological integrity with the supreme spirit. This integration leads to moderation in life and to all ethical virtues The statement of Yajnavalkya contained in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad elucidates the ultimate axiological integration of all things and relations of life as the supreme principle of the Upanishadic Vedanta It is in the light of these and such other statements of the Upanishads that an axiological positivism is sought to be discovered in the present study of the Upanishads.

students, and which I could practically maintain after his appointment as Tagore Professor of Indian Culture and History, in the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur from 1962 to 1977.

I have consecrated this study of the Upanishads to the sacred memory of Professor R.D. Ranade, the great teacher of Philosophy in the University of Allahabad. Professor Ranade was a legend in Allahabad, and outside in India also, for his philosophic acumen, his saintly life and his mystic faith. For ten years from 1938 I had the privilege of close association with him and of receiving divine spiritual inspiration from him I was initiated into the Upanishadic thought by him while I translated his 'Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy' into Hindi in 1938. I have preserved the personal copy of the original English book which he presented to me 'as a small token of love' under his own autograph My dedication of this book to the memory of my great master is a tiny token of my deep reverence for him and for the memories of my living contacts with him. The dedication is only a little token of my reverence for the great Master. It is no honour to him, nor is it of any considerable credit to the poorest among his pupils, many of whom have risen to become Heads of the Departments of Philosophy at the Universities of Allahabad, Benares, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Poona, Baroda etc. and have made creditable contributions to philosophic studies

I must thank Messrs Sharma Bros Electromatic Press, Alwar, creative printers of Rajasthan, for the clean and careful printing of the book at their Auto-Composing Plant—Linotype, which is a pride for Rajasthan. But I have also to apologise for many kinds of errors that are likely to have been left uncorrected in a voluminous book of a writer who suffers the unique privilege of absolute authorship characterized by utter helplessness in regard to all secondary work connected with the writing, typing and printing of a referential book like this In a work full of footnotes, help of another person could save from many errors particularly of reference and printing But no such help has ever

been available to me in life I have alone corrected the type-script, press-proofs and verified foot-notes, as I have done in case of my other books I might have slipped over many mistakes due to oversight and subjective equation Many foot-notes might have been misplaced in this book due to lack of objective verification by a second person I apologise for all errors to the learned scholars and request them to excuse me for the inconvenience that will be caused to them by these errors

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## CHAPTER—I

# INTRODUCTION

The Upanishads are the earliest philosophical works of India They are the concluding portions of the Vedas and are therefore called the Vedanta i e. the end of the Vedas The Vedas are the earliest documents of Indian mind and are also regarded as the most ancient records of mankind The Vedas are collections of hymns which the ancient Indians used to sing in praise of gods These gods were mostly personifications of natural powers and natural objects Thus the Vedas are poetical and musical in form, and religious in spirit Numerous philosophical ideas are found to be mingled with the religio-emotional rhapsodies of the Vedic hymns These hymns used to be sung at the occasion of the fire-sacrifices which constituted the mode of the Vedic religion Rhapsodies and rituals made the Vedic religion a cultural festival the spirit of which pervades the living culture of India upto the present day Marriage and other socio-cultural ceremonies are performed even today on the pattern of ancient fire-sacrifices accompanied with the chanting of Vedic hymns

The prose works of Brahmanas and Aranyakas, which followed upon the collections of Vedic hymns, are largely devoted to reflections about the methodology and motive of Vedic rituals. Occasional glimpses of philosophical ideas are not rare in them The philosophical tendencies, which are traceable in the Vedic hymns, the Brahmanas and the Aranyakas, find their culmination in the Upanishads Traces of Vedic ritualism continue particularly in the larger Upanishads like the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka, but the general and dominant trend of the Upanishads is evidently philosophical. The Upanishads also are largely poetical, but they are more reflective and contemplative

in content than emotional or religious They are finest examples of philosophical poetry, simple, transparent, penetrating, revealing Spiritual revelation takes the place of religio-emotional rhapsodies in the Upanishad The cosmological contemplation of the Vedic hymns also continues in the Upanishads, but the interrogative astonishment of the Vedic hymns ends in a spiritual theory of Cosmology in the Upanishads They discover the spiritual foundation of the universe. With this discovery the spiritual reality becomes the main occupation of Upanishadic thinking

This spiritual reality is taken by the Upanishadic sages as the essence and the end of life The discovery of the spiritual truth of life is the greatest miracle of human thought Nowhere else human contemplation reached so close to it and consequently no other people sought it so keenly in life. The Upanishadic sages themselves were astonished at their discovery of this spiritual truth of life and regarded both its discovery and realization as a great miracle[1] It constituted for them the highest knowledge As gospels of this highest knowledge the Upanishads can be regarded as the 'end of the Vedas' in the axiological sense also Vedas mean and are the treasury of ancient knowledge (Veda=to know) and the Upanishads mark the culmination of it It is a veritable miracle of Indian genius that the spiritual knowledge which has not been reached even as the end of the collective human thinking of the world marked the end of Vedic knwledge and the beginning of philosophic reflection in India, which is embodied in the Upanishads.

The spiritual reality called Brahman is the main theme of the Upanishads It has been conceived in an ontological manner in the Vedantic schools of philosophy which developed after the Upanishads. The ontological inclination is evident, and

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[2] आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धाऽऽश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ।

कठ० १-२-७

often dominant, even in the Upanishads, yet the axiological intention of the Upanishads is not obscured by this ontological bias The Isha Upanishad, which is most remarkable in the sense that it is directly the concluding part of the Samaveda, contains the highest principle of concrete axiology in its very first verse.[2] This axiological strain is striking in many of the Upanishads It is most unfortunate accident of Indian thought that this axiological strain was obscured in the dialectical disputes about the ontological nature of reality in the philosophical tradition that followed the Upanishads

The philosophical miracle of the discovery of the spiritual secret of life could be possible due to the concrete spiritual strain that was implied in the religious ritualism of the Vedas and that continued in the methodology of the Upanishadic education. The Vedic religion is externally a ritualism, but a deep strain of concrete spiritualism is implied in its collective cultural and musical ceremonialism. This truth of Vedic religion is completely ignored by formal scholars of India as well as of the west. Common form and ritual, alongwith common music, generates (or regenerates) a concrete spiritual experience Thus the Vedic religion is substantively a concrete and living spiritualism, which is integrated with ritual, music and other secular and social values of life. In fact it is a concrete spiritualism by virtue of this integration. This integration secured in the more collective and more cultural life of early Vedic times was later disturbed in the diffusion of population in the agricultural life of the extensive plains of northern India The original Vedic strain of concrete and living spiritualism was retained in the popular musical culture and in the occasional celebration of ceremonies with Vedic rituals

The original integration of concrete Vedic spiritualism with secular and social life was more disturbed in the secluded life

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[2] ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् ।

of the forest hermitages as the popular modes of retaining it could not be maintained in it Hence it was in these forest hermitages of ancient India that a most serious and a most sincere attempt was made to rediscover and restore the original spiritual principle of life which pervaded and inspired the Vedic culture The intimate educational method that was adopted by the sages who lived in these forest hermitages, which were remnants of a mode of living that was more popular in early Vedic times, was at once a method of imparting spiritual knowledge to devoted disciples as well as a situation in which that spiritual knowledge could be revealed The Upanishadic sages recollected the spiritual truth of life in the agony of their isolation They tried to visualize it in their contemplation and to impart it to their disciples through a triple method of learning, contemplation and realization The forest hermitages of Upanishadic times were thus the philosophic laboratories in which ancient Indian sages were exploring the original spiritual truth of life embodied in concrete Vedic culture and were endeavouring to restore it in their co-operative contemplation with their disciples It was a subjective attempt to rediscover and to restore the living spiritual truth of Vedic culture and life What was an actual, though implied truth of Vedic life, was sought as a deep secret of experience and as a difficult but supreme goal of life

The intimate educational method of the Upanishadic education, and inquiry into the spiritual truth of life is implied in the very designation of these works as Upanishads. The term Upanishad does not signify any content of thought but only the method of education and inquiry It means "sitting (sad) intently (ni) near (up)" the teacher. It was a close and intimate instruction and inquiry As a method it was a cooperative quest of truth Its cooperative character is evident in the Shanti patha in which the teacher and the disciple join in a collective prayer for 'the glory of their learning and for a cordial relationship between them, which may not be tainted by any jealousy

between them',[3] and in the opening verse of the Shwetashwatara Upanishad in which the sages sit together to inquire into the nature of reality and life Examples of this intimate method of instruction and inquiry are scattered over in the Katha, Prashna, Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka and other Upanishads.

The remnants of the concrete, integral and cultural spirituality of the mode of the Vedic religion were retained in the intimate method of instruction and inquiry adopted in the Upanishads and the spiritual reality which was vanishing from concrete life was sought to be explored and restored with the help of these remnants What was an immediate fact of life in the Vedic mode of culture was sought as an esoteric truth in personal and private contemplation. The method of Upanishadic quest is externally co-operative but internally esoteric The sages seek the reality in intense meditations and instruct their disciples also to discover it for themselves in their own experience. The reason of it is that the spiritual reality is an immediate fact of experience. It cannot be expressed or communicated through speech and thought. It is beyond speech, mind and thought.[4] It is integral and immediate, while these are dualistic and mediate. Hence it cannot be rendered in terms of these It is revealed only in the silence and serenity of immediate and integral experience full of divine delight.

This experience of reality is not individualistic. It expresses itself in individuals, but not in them as individuals Theoretically it is not only above ego and individuality but also above intellect,[5] which is impersonal in nature, though dualistic and mediate in its method of functioning Thus the concrete and living

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[3] तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै। कठ० शान्तिपाठ

[4] यतो वाचः निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह। तैत्तिरीय० २-९-१

[5] नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यः न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन। कठ० १-२
बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः। कठ० १-३-१०

Upanishadic instruction and inquiry. The former is common and rational The latter is individual, esoteric and contemplative. Vision is the core of Indian philosophy, while reason is the rule of western thought. The dynamics of the peripatetic pedagogy of Aristotle is to be contrasted from the intent sitting (Ni + Sad) of Upanishads Reason is a progressive method of thinking which reveals new dimensions of truth and opens new directions of advance of thought Hence Western philosophy is a constantly advancing history of new ideas of and new approaches to truth, commensurate with the political adventures of Western peoples from Alexander to Columbus and his successors, while Indian philosophy which originated in the Upanishads in the contemplative vision of the delightful spiritual reality actualized in Vedic culture, continued mainly as a desperate intellectual effort to restore it through rational approximations and mystical meditations Engrossed in the rapture of recapitulation of spiritual reality and in the zeal to restore it, it did not advance towards new regions of thought like the Western philosophy.

Thus from the rational, human and social point of view, Indian philosophy suffers from a severe disadvantage in comparison to Western philosophy. The only and the greatest virtue of Indian philosophy consists in the fact that it arrived at once, in the earliest philosophical treatises known as Upanishads, at the final truth of life and experience, which the Western philosophies have not been able to imagine due to their different beginning in Greek thought. It is unfortunate that Indian thought which followed upon the Upanishads also ignored the cardinal truth revealed in the Upanishads as delight (ananda) and engaged in futile reasonings about cosmology and its relation to reality. Not only that the dimension of delight was ignored, but the relation of the world and life to spiritual reality was misunderstood to such an extent that Shankaracharya and his followers are reported to have robbed both the world and life of all reality and value. They regard them as unreal

and illusory The Advaita Vedanta of Shankaracharya and his followers is represented as an absolutistic monism according to which transcendent Brahman is the only reality All else is unreal[6] The world and the individual are only phenomenal realities which have only a provisional existence They are the projections of ignorance like the rope appearing as a snake in darkness They disappear in the wake of spiritual enlightenment even as the illusory snake vanishes after sunrise Like the rope only the Brahman remains The world disappears and the individual merges in the Absolute Brahman even as the rivers lose their identity in the ocean[7]

When the world and the individual have no ultimate reality, life has no value Brahman is the eternal, immutable and non-dualistic reality. World and life are temporal The world is dualistic and perishable. Life is activity in time which involves change and mutation Hence from the standard and standpoint of reality both world and life are ultimately unreal These can be taken as provisionally real only till they vanish like due drops in the sunrise of spiritual enlightenment Diversity of the objective world, mutability of processes in time, perishability of the objects and of the results of actions etc make these logically incompatible with the integral unity, eternality and immutability of the reality that is called Brahman Hence these are all relegated to the realm of unreality which is provisionally serviceable only till the vision of reality arises in the life of a man

This is what is generally accepted as the Advaita view of the Vedanta which was propounded by Shankaracharya and elaborated into further details by his followers Scholars of

[6] ब्रह्मसत्य जगन्मिथ्या ।

[7] यथा नद्य. स्यन्दमाना समुद्रे अस्त गच्छन्ति नामरूपं विहाय ।

मुण्डक ३-२-८

Vedanta also consider the view of Shankaracharya to be closer to the intention of the Upanishads which are the original treatises of the Vedantic philosophy. It is true that a few indications can be found in the texts of the Upanishads which suggest the fundamental tenets of Shankaracharya Condemnation of diversity[8] and dissolution of individuality[9] are definitely supported by the words of the Upanishads. The Brahman is said to be one without a second[10] Though the word maya does occur rarely in the Upanishads and that also not in the sense in which it is used in later Advaita, the idea of illusoriness is understood to be suggested by some statements of the Upanishads. The three-fold standpoint of reality which is integral to Shankaracharya's view of the Vedanta does not seem to be propounded in the Upanishads It is Shankaracharya's innovation designed to explain certain statements of the Upanishads, like the injunction about actions found in the Isha Upanishad, which do not accord with his absolute spiritualism. Transcendence of good and evil also is suggested in a few statements of Upanishad which describe the final state of spiritual realization to be beyond good and evil.[11]

This commonly accepted view about the philosophy of the Upanishads, as sponsored by Shankaracharya and elaborated by his followers, is not completely correct and is not admissible without reservations. Even the view of Shankaracharya is not so completely monistic and so drastically uncompromising with the reality of the world as his followers take it to be and is, after them, adduced by his Indian and western critics for subs-

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[8] मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति । कठ० २-१-१०

[9] यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमाना समुद्रे अस्त गच्छन्ति नामरूप विहाय ।

मुण्डक ३-२-८

[10] एकमेवाद्वितीय ब्रह्म । छा० ६-२-१

[11] छा० ४-४-३, तै० २-९

tantiating his world-negation The Upanishads are not the work and the view of a single thinker The orthodox tradition treats them as 'revealed scriptures' and hence finds it necessary to discover a consistent view in them in order to justify their scriptural authenticity. But in fact they are the works of several authors Even single Upanishads, specially the larger ones, seem to contain views of several sages Hence a considerate study of Upanishads cannot make an absolute judgment on the basis of such solitary statements as are not in harmony with the general view maintained by most of the Upanishads The emphatically positivistic statements particularly of smaller but important Upanishads, must be given the consideration they deserve. The cardinal principles of the Advaita of Shankaracharya are to be considered in relation to the crucial logical and metaphysical implications of the fundamentals of the Vedanta and the suggestions, spread over his commentaries, which indicate an accord with realistic positivism are not to be ignored. With such an approach to the Vedanta it can be possible to find positivistic spiritualism as the dominant theme of the Upanishads and also to reconcile Shankaracharya's view with it

It is notable about the Upanishads that the smaller Upanishads like Isha, Kena, Mandukya, Aitareya etc, which are important also, propound an evidently positivistic view of reality and life They support the reality of the objective world, and the importance of secular, social and ethical values, with the only qualification that they regard the world and the values of life ultimately supported by the supreme spiritual reality which is the supreme value also and gives value to all values. In an axiological illusion, the values of the world are taken to be as sustained in their own limits When this illusion is dispelled by an existential nihilation the unfoundedness of these values is disclosed These Upanishads support without any reservations, like those which Shankaracharya later introduced into the Vedantic thought, the reality of the world and the value of actions They deal with food, sex, social relations and

ethical values in all earnestness, without giving any indication about their illusoriness or unreality. It is on the basis of such positivistic statements of these Upanishads that a positive spiritualistic humanism is advanced in the present study as the dominant view of the Upanishads

On such a positivistic approach it is found that the Upanishads give due and unreserved importance to secular values of food, sex, health, wealth etc Food and sex are elaborately treated in some of the Upanishads The basic domestic relationships and the general human relationship are commended in several Upanishads, without any idea of such anti-social ascenticism as is suggested by isolated statements of a few other Upanishads. Normal secular, sexual and social humanism is also supported by the general temper of the life of the Upanishadic sages Most of them live a normal domestic life with their wives, which is enhanced by the inclusion of disciples in the family, both in regard to its humanistic warmth and spiritualistic value

Ample evidence can be gathered from the texts of the Upanishads to support the view that the Upanishads recognise the secular, social and ethical values of life with due sincerity and earnestness without having any misgivings about their ultimate importance and reality, such as are implied in the theory of Maya and the doctrine of three-fold standard of reality attributed to Shankaracharya.

The foremost among the secular values is food. Food is necessary for life. Even the saints and extreme spiritualists cannot live and preach their doctrine without food. The Upanishads emphatically recognise this crucial value of food. Three larger Upanishads, the Taittiriya, the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka deal seriously and quite extensively with the importance of food in life. The Taittiriya Upanishad contains a whole treatise on food, from which our national motto about

food that 'we should grow more food'[12] is borrowed. The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads deeply recognise the vital importance of food for sustenance of life in the ancedotes of Ushashti Chakrayana and Svetaketu. The smaller Upnishads have no place to deal with any particular values but their general axiological view supports the importance of these values and gives no reflection indicating unreality of these values The more ascetic Upanishads like the Katha and the Mundaka only suggest the inadequacy of secular values, which is admissible in the spiritualistic axiology of the Upanishads. But these values are not denied They are desired to be integrated with the supreme spiritual value of the Brahman

Besides food, the secular value of sex also is duly recognised in several Upanishads Inspite of the general ascetic tone of the Upanishads and their emphasis on restraint, the phenomenon of sex is given considerable importance in the Upanishads. Joy and generation are two main aspects of sex Both these aspects of sex are deeply appreciated in the Upanishads The sexual organs are regarded as the centre of all enjoyment of life[13] Generation is treated with due decorum, as a social and cultural function of life[14] Men are urged to bestow all honour and care upon the pregnant woman.[15] It is only in some rare statements of a few Upanishads that an ascetic strain is evidently noticed but no where does the Upanishadic asceticism appear to be *tentamount* to complete denial of sex in life, as it was taken to be later in Jainism and Buddhism Yajnavalkya is the only Upanishadic sage who is reported to resort to Sannyasa, but even he ventures upon it in fairly old age All other sages of the Upanishads live a normal domestic life with their

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[12] अन्न बहु कुर्वीत । तैत्तिरीय० ३-९

[13] सर्वेषामानन्दानामुपस्थ एकायनम् । बृह० २-४-११

[14] प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः । तैत्तिरीय० १-११

[15] सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या । ऐतरेय० २-१३

wives. The Upanishads understand Brahmacharya, not in the sense of absolute celebacy as it was later taken to mean, but only the sense of a moderate sexual life. Cohabitation with one's wife during night was regarded as tentamount to Brahmacharya[16] Sexual activity is described in the Brahadaranyaka Upanishad without any sign of condemnation as it is found in the later ascetic tradition of India. Asceticism of the Upanishads is moderate and relative It signifies only that sensuality does not lead to salvation in life. It leads, on the other hand, to weariness of senses[17] But moderate sex-life is supported by Upanishads and prescribed for young graduates taking leave of their teachers after completion of their studies[18] The integration of sex with supreme spiritual value according to the injunction of the Isha Upanishad will harmonize sex, like food etc, with a spirituo-cultural view of life propounded in the Upanishads

Besides food and sex, which are cardinal secular values, several other mundane values are given due recognition and regard in the Upanishads Notable among them are body, physical strength, vital being, senses, mind, wealth etc The body is regarded as the vehicle of the spirit even as the chariot is the vehicle of the soldier, in the famous analogy found in the Katha Upanishad Healthy and strong body is necessary for spiritual realization The Upanishads pray for the soundness and fortitude of senses and parts of the body[19] The vital being is considered to be cardinal in several Upanishads Wealth is not disregarded but appreciated, though with due limitations by Yajnavalkya, the greatest among sages of the Upanishads. It is

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[16] रात्रौ रत्या सगच्छते तद् ब्रह्मचर्यमेव। प्रश्न० १-१३

[17] सर्वेन्द्रियाणा जरयन्ति तेज·। कठ० १-१-२६

[18] प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः। तैत्तिरीय० १-११

[19] शान्तिपाठ-प्रश्नोपनिपद्

true, as Nachiketas says in the Katha Upanishad that man cannot be satiated by wealth,,[20] but wealth as a necessary means of life is recognised in the Taittiriya Upanishad, the departing disciples are asked by the teacher to propagate the progeny and to offer to the teacher the desired money.[21]

Thus we find that important secular values are given due importance in the Upanishads, with the only qualification that excessive indulgence in them leads not to satiation but to frustration, and spiritualization of them can invest them with a new dimension of excellence and can harmonize them with the exalted spirituo-cultural view of life which is propounded in the *Upanishads*

With the secular values, the social and ethical values also are given due recognition in the Upanishads The ethical values are regarded as an essential means for spiritual realization. The Upanishads contain the teachings of the sages who lived a rather secluded (and consequently unsocial life) in the forests It is a sign of their normal and human view of life that they attach due importance to fundamental social relationships The importance of the teacher-disciple relationship was natural to them as masters of ancient Indian seminaries But as normal human beings they have shown due regard for parental and conjugal relationship The parental relationship is treated as divine in Indian tradition and the Upanishads also support this tradition The general human relationship, endowed with love for man as man, is sanctified in the Isha and other Upanishads The love of man and regard for the stranger as a guest is an admirable feature of traditional Indian courtesy and culture

The social values are essentially altruistic and thus moral by implication But the specifically ethical values are prescribed

[20] न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यः । क० १-१-२७

[21] आचार्याय प्रियधनमाहृत्य । तै० १-११

in the Upanishads as an essential part of the spiritual discipline necessary for spiritual realization Thus the ethical values, though they have social and altruistic reflection, signify directly the moral accomplishment of disciples who aspire for spiritual realization. The ethical values of truth, penance, celefacy, *moderation*, faith, love, calm etc. are the pillars of spiritual discipline prescribed in the Upanishads These virtues are emphasised in several Upanishads. Truth is moral righteousness which is the root of all other virtues. Faith in truth or in any other higher values implies transcendence of ego and marks the principal of limitation of all sensory inclinations Penance, celebacy etc. are wider forms of restrainst of senses which follows from faith

The appreciation of moral virtues is an evident fact of Upanishads which can be supported by texts. Moral virtues are conducive to spiritual realization Moral discipline is the only possible practical course that can be followed by an aspirant. The logical and metaphysical adequacy of moral conduct as means of realization is challengeable on account of the technical discrepancy involved in the relation of moral action to eternal reality of Brahman As the Mundaka Upanishad asserts the Brahman which is eternal cannot be brought about by action [22] Katha Upanishad reveals the reason of this inadequacy of action for spiritual realization. the eternal cannot be attained by temporal means [23] Action is a course in time. What comes in course of time also perishes. Hence eternal Brahman cannot be realized by moral action in course of time. This logico-metaphysical discrepancy in moral action makes it external to spiritual realization. It is on the basis of the texts cited above that Shankaracharya denounces action in the introduction to his Bhashya on the Bhagwadgita and also in his other writings.

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[23] नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन । मुण्डक० १-२-१२

[23] न ह्यध्रुवै. प्राप्यते तद्ध्रुवम् । कठ० १-२-१०

But besides the above texts which expose the inadequacy of moral action to spiritual realization, there are other texts of Upanishads which support the value of moral action without any such suspicions or reservations These texts are further supported by statements in which the dynamic nature of spiritual reality is clearly asserted The Isha Upanishad enjoins upon man to devote to actions all his life though he should not be completely involved in it and have a spiritual attitude towards it [24] The dynamic nature of spiritual reality is also affirmed in the same Upanishad.[25] If the above two standpoints of the Upanishads are to be reconciled, it can be done only by recognising moral action as a dimension of reality In so far as the moral action is above ego and consequently above duality, its kinship with spiritual reality is admissible Inspite of the discrepancy indicated above the good has an affinity with reality. It is for this reason that some Upanishads like the Katha consider cessation of immorality and evil as a necessary condition for imitation into spiritual discipline.[26] The Taittiriya Upanishad which contains an illuminating account of spiritual progress regards penance or tapas as the supreme means of spiritual realization. Sage Varuna, the father of Bhrigu instructs his son repeatedly to realize Brahman by tapas [27]

The moral means are not external to spiritual reality in the sense of having no integral relation with it but in the sense of being not casually connected with it, as spiritual realization cannot be causally determined Both activity and morality (i e. good) are integral to reality and are thus real and not unreal and illusory as they are alleged to be by the followers of Shankaracharya and by the critics of Advaita Vedanta The

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[24] ईशावास्यमिद सर्वम् । ईश० १

[25] तदेजति तन्नैजति । ईश० ५

[26] नाविरतो दुश्चरितात् । कठ० १-२-२४

[27] तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तैत्ति० ३-२

origin and nature of evil is inexplicable. But good is integral to reality The complexity of the meaning of the Sanskrit word 'sat' is a complex proof of it. 'Sat' signifies existence, reality and good. Infact these are not three separate meanings of the word 'sat', but three integral dimensions of reality signified by the complex meaning of the word. The reality is identified with 'good' (Shivam) in the Mandukya Upanishad[28] The ultimate spiritual realization is designated as 'highest good' (Nishreyas). Good and transcendence, dynamics and eternity are concurrent in the reality. It is dynamic, yet above mutation and time, it is good, but above it also

The above introductory indications about the recognition of secular, social and ethical values in the Upanishads suggest that these values are assigned ample importance in the Upanishads These indications are elaborated in the following chapters with the help of authentic texts from the Upanishads. The account of values given in the following chapters of this book will show how unjust and misleading it is to consider Upanishads as ascetic and world negating or other-worldly. The extensive treatment of the secular values of food and sex found in several Upanishads confirms their positive approach to life and reality The positivistic principles propounded in some Upanishads afford a strong theoretical support to such a view. The dominant view of the Upanishads seems to be an integral spiritualism, a view according to which the secular values are neither denied nor are they considered to be ultimate in themselves, but they fulfil themselves in their integration with the supreme value Such an integration leads to transvaluation of these values.

The main difficulty about such an understanding of the Upanishads arises on account of a few statements found in some

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[28] शान्तं शिवं अद्वैतम् । माण्डूक्य० ७

of the Upanishads which appear to deny duality, and devalue activity, individuality, social relations etc. Such statements are scarce but they cannot be ignored. It is by these statements that Shankaracharya was led into exclusively transcendental metaphysics and into a denunciation of diversity and action. He evolved a dual standpoint of reality in which he allowed a provisional reality to the world and life His theory of Vivartavada i e of illusory creation also is a consequence of theoretical discrepancies implied in the idea of creation from the immutable Brahman, i e in the question of correlation of eternity with time. Shankaracharya only saw clearly these theoretical discrepancies and boldly exposed the conclusions to which certain premises of the Vedanta led rational thinking. He also innovated certain principles with the help of which alone divergent statements of the Upanishads could be reconciled. He explained Karma and Bhakti as provisional resorts for the ignorant, and added qualifications and conditions to words of the text wherever some basic principle of the Vedanta seemed to him in jeopardy.

Now so far as the Upanishads are concerned, the whole difficulty and dispute arises from the fact that they are taken to be revealed scriptures and therefore to contain a single consistent philosophy The Upanishads certainly represent a general trend of later Vedic thought which was dominantly spiritual But they are not the work of a single sage Hence varying views and tones about truths are found in them. These implicit divergences of views about some fundamental truths have led to the development of different schools of the Vedanta Cosmology and transcendental metaphysics are such spheres of reality about which much dispute and divergence of reason can be possible, as in fact they are beyond reason and are not verifiable. In truth all divergence and dispute in Vedanta from the Upanishads to the later interpretors of the Vedanta is due to unwarranted ventures of revelations and reason on the part of the ancient sages and thinkers Considerable unanmity of opi-

nion can be found in the Upanishads about things which are within the realm of the reasonable.

Metaphysical reality of the Brahman cannot be defined or described adequately in language of thought. It can be realized in integral experience. This fact is asserted by the Upanishads themselves and admitted by all followers of the Vedanta. Yet the Vedantic treatises abound not only in assertions but arguments about it The Upanishads contain only suggestive statements which are for guiding experience. But later thinkers have involved themselves in elaborate argumentation about metaphysical spiritual reality of Brahman and along with it about cosmology which is equally unarguable and unverifiable. Suggestive statements may be made about the nature of reality, status of the individual and the objective world in the realm of reality, and about the correlation of action and morality with reality But all these things can be verified only in experience, either by degrees or in consummation of experience.

Considerable consensus of opinion will be found in the Upanishads about reasonable things, among which secular, social and ethical values are important from the point of view of common man. Upanishadic view about these values can give profitable guide-lines even for realistic and reasonable spiritual aspirants. It is to this reasonable sphere of Upanishadic thought that the present study is chiefly devoted. The account of these values as presented in this study is supported by several statements of the Upanishads Most of the Upanishads recognise the importance of these values without any such reservations as are introduced in the Vedantic thought by Shankaracharya and his followers. The Upanishads have no doubt about the importance of these values in life. The life of the sages of the Upanishads also corroborates their view about these values. Some crucial statements of Upanishads suggest the principle of integration of these values with the supreme spiritual reality. Spiritual integration of these values seems to be the do-

minant and reasonable view of the Upanishads This is the view that has been worked out in the present study. Statements of the Upanishads which seem to contradict this view are to be treated as isolated and unwarranted views only of particular sages Moderate students of the Vedanta will find such a view quite reasonable They will find the treatment of values contained in this book considerably convincing

Support of such a view can be found, at least to some extent, even in the works and words of Shankaracharya The theories of three standards of reality and illusory causation were evolved by him in the logical necessity of reconciling empirical principles with transcendental reality. These theories became logical imperatives of Vedanta for him His views about Karma are to be judged in the context of logical discrepancy of time in relation to reality. Such difficulties are inevitable when the immovable or transcendent dimension of reality is exclusively emphasised and the dynamic dimension of reality which, according to Isha Upanishad is integral to it, is ignored

Cosmology is only a secondary problem for Shankaracharya Its primary purpose is to prove the sole and supreme reality of Brahman with the help of causal reasoning Definite statements in his commentaries support this position [29]

One word 'aprithaka' (inseparable) which frequently occurs in his commentaries on Upanishads, is very crucial for understanding his real intention This word suggests that the real intention of Shankaracharya is not the denial of the objective world and values but integration of them with the supreme

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[29] अत्रात्मावबोधमात्रस्य विवक्षितत्वात् सर्वोयमर्थवादः ।

ऐत० भाष्य २-१-१

spiritual reality. That also is the general view of the Upanishads. This integral spiritualism can be treated as the general view of the Upanishads which can be largely reconciled with the view of Shankaracharya also Some technical theories of Advaita like Vivartavada will have to be treated as logical imperatives of reason venturing in the realm in which its intervention is not warranted according to the verdict of the Upanishads themselves The arguments of the followers of Shankaracharya and also of the thinkers of other schools of Vedanta, are only in pursuance of these ventures initiated by the Acharyas

The present study avoids these unwarranted ventures of revelation and reason in the realm of the transcendental spiritual reality and concentrates on an exposition of reasonable view about positive values of life so far as they are recognised in the Upanishads, and it seeks to find support for this view in the texts of the Upanishads. Both its exposition and argument will be found to be reasonable and useful for understanding the truth of Upanishadic spiritualism so far as it is reasonably possible

This integral spiritualism is a view of the Vedanta which is largely supported by the Upanishads It can be reconciled with the Advaita of Shankaracharya also. Shri Aurobindo, in modern times, has worked out this integral spiritualism as an immediate synthesis of worldly values of food, sex, relations, morality etc with the supreme spiritual reality. The principle of this synthesis is revealed in the Isha Upanishad in its very first verse and is elaborated in its subsequent verses Ethical values operate as the schema of this synthesis Hence they are given great importance in Upanishadic discipline They are the only course through which spiritual consummation of life can be attained The importance given to ethical values in all the Upanishads, as the only course of spiritual realization, confirms that all the Upanishads recognise this ethical schematism as the principle of this spiritual synthesis of values

A few statements of some Upanishads suggest that the spiritual reality is beyond good and evil, that the good and even evil is transcended in spiritual realization, and that the realized become above good and evil[30] It is taken to imply that the realized get a licence to commit evil and also that the good is external and not integral to reality Both these ideas are wrong. The Katha Upanishad demands one to abandon all evil before he can be initiated into spiritual discipline.[31] One who has abandoned evil before entering upon the spiritual course cannot take recourse to it again The characteristics of the realized man as described in the Upanishads are not coherent with the slightest evil But good is integral to reality. The Mandukya Upanishad describes it as 'good' (Shiva).[32] The complex meaning of 'Sat' as signifying both 'being' and 'good' suggests that good is integral to reality. The injunction contained in the second verse of the Isha Upanishads suggests that the life of the realized person also is a life of good conduct As Shri Harsa has revealed in his Naishkarmya Siddhi the good which is an attainment for the aspirant becomes a spontaneous expression of existence for the realized even as fragrance is emitted naturally by a flower.[33]

The positive and integral spiritualism of the Upanishads recognises the due place of secular, social and ethical values in life. The aesthetic value of beauty is conspicuous in the Upanishads by complete absence The reason of it is explained in the following chapter dealing with the Axiology of the Upanishads The intellectual value of reason is not considered to be adequate

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30 तैत्तिरीय० २-६

31 नाविरतो दुश्चरितात् । कठ० १-२-२४

32 शान्तं शिवं अद्वैतम् । माण्डूक्य० ७

33 नैष्कर्म्य सिद्धि । ४-६६

for spiritual realization[34] Intellect is dualistic and it cannot obtain the integral reality of spirit. Intellectual activity should cease in the state of realization.[35] Intellect is prone to lead one into wreckless and fruitless reasonings Hence it is to be restrained by spirit. It is no doubt a guide in human life but it must be subordinated to spirit It should be governed by the spirit as a charioteer is governed by the hero[36] The spiritual aspirants should surrender the intellect to spirit, i e let it be guided by spirit[37]

But alongwith intellect, all other values are required to be spiritualized by the Upanishads The integral spiritualism of the Upanishads demands a transformation and transvaluation of other values according to the supreme spiritual value. This spiritualization of values is the only course for the salvation of man It does not imply a denial or a devaluation of other values. But it certainly does not allow an unqualified indulgence of man in secular values It enjoins upon him a limitation of them and a regulation of them so as to make them consonant with spiritual beautitude of life. The spiritualization of other values lends a new dimension and new excellence to other values without divesting them of their intrinsic and specific character.

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[34] नैपा तर्केणमतिरापनेया। कठ० १-२-९

[35] वुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति। कठ० २-३-१०

[36] कठ० १-३-९

[37] ज्ञानमात्मनि महते नियच्छेत् तद् यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि। कठ० १-३-१३

CHAPTER—II

# AXIOLOGY OF THE UPANISHADS

## 1. Metaphysics and Value in the Upanishads

The philosophy of the Upanishads or the Vedanta, as it is known in the form of the great philosophical tradition of India inspired by the Upanishads, is generally understood as a metaphysics of ultimate reality. Its main concern is believed to be with Brahman as the ultimate reality of existence and life. Brahman is discovered and asserted as the ultimate basis and cause of the universe 'The wind blows, the sun shines, and the fire burns by its fear.'[1] It is the supreme light of the universe and all other lights shine after it. It illumines all things of the Universe[2] There is ample basis in the Upanishads to substantiate the dominantly meta-physical strain of earliest ancient documents of Indian philosophy.

The origins of the dominance of metaphysics are to be found in the Vedas which are the earliest documents of Indian life and to which the Upanishads belong as their concluding portions. The Upanishads are called the Vedanta as they constitute the ending portions of the Vedas The Vedas are largely collections of hymns (mantras) which ancient Indians used to sing in praise of nature-gods to whom they used to offer oblations at sacrifices that formed the common mode of religious ritual in ancient Indian society But along with these prayer hymns are to be found many reflective rhapsodies containing ancient Indian speculations about the origin and cause of creation The famous

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1 भीषास्माद्वात. पवते । भीषादेति सूर्य । भीषास्माद् अग्निश्च ।
तैत्तिरीय० २-८

2 तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्व तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति । कठ० २-२-१५

Nasadiya Sukta of Rigveda records the ancient Indian inquiry into the nature of the ultimate cause from which the Universe sprang The ancient Indian sages contemplate whether this ultimate cause was being or non-being and conclude that it is difficult to assert anything about it. It ends with an agnostic strain and exclaims—who could know the nature of this ultimate cause of the universe! The Chhandogya Upanishad re-opens the problem and questions: how can anything come out of nothing and hence is inclined to assert that the original causal reality was in the form of being[3] The Svetashwatara Upanishad considers several alternatives as possible ultimate cause of universe and finally concludes that Brahman or the spirit is the ultimate cause and ultimate reality Many other Upanishads also inquire into the nature of the ultimate cause of the Universe and of ultimate reality.

Thus metaphysics, with a cosmological strain, will be found to be a dominant theme of the Upanishads. But this metaphysics is not entirely ontological. It is not confined only to absolute and neutral Being. The Upanishads find the ultimate reality to be spiritual i.e Conscious and Blissful. The consciousness as the nature of reality is not only cognitive but it is Blissful also On a deeper analysis Bliss is found to be the supreme essence of Reality as is elucidated by the story of Bhrigu's gradual realization narrated in the Tattiriya Upanishad Bliss also is conscious and not unconscious, though the blissful consciousness is integral and not divided by the subject-object duality. In this respect it may be treated as Super-conscious, but it is not certainly unconscious. Unconscious bliss is a contradiction in terms, though it is suggested by some thinkers to be unmanifestly present in inanimate being.

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3 कथमसतः सज्जायेत । सत्वमेव सोम्य इदमग्र आसीत् ।

छान्दोग्य० ६-२-१ से ४

However the conscious and Blissful nature of reality relates it to human life and also suggests its axiological implications. The mere neutral and absolute being may be unaxiological, but the conscious and blissful being cannot be so. As conscious and blissful the metaphysical reality of the Upanishads also becomes axiological Axiology is a philosophy of value. Value is essentially related to human existence and life However indefinable the value may be, it is value for man It is the essence or significance and meaning of man's existence The ultimate spiritual reality of the Upanishads also is the foundation and the destiny of man's life It is conscious and blissful Consciousness is the distinctive characteristic of man as compared to inanimate being Bliss is man's more unique privilege than it is of any other creature of the world Other creatures also may possess some joy in their life but the possibility of joy is distinctly greater in man On a deeper analysis Bliss will be found to be the supreme value in man's life, the value of values, which imparts value to other values

Bliss is also conscious but it incorporates integral consciousness in it. Normally consciouness is cognitive and as cognitive it is dualistic It involves a distinction of the subject and the object—an object which is known and a subject which knows it. Consciousness also, though dualistic, is an essential value of human existence When a man falls unconscious in a swoon or on account of some cerebral malady, he becomes not only inactive but also looks like an inanimate being. He appears like a lifeless log of flesh, hideous like a dead man Consciousness not only inspires and directs activity of life, but it also gives man an amiable being It is the principle of understanding and knowledge which constitute the treasure of life Consciousness not only logically implies being, but it also psychologically confirms the being of man The being of inanimate things is unconscious and objective being, being 'in itself' (en soi) as the existentialists call it It has no significance for the thing (pour soi) that has

being. It has a significance, if any, for other conscious beings. Such significance undervalues the value of the thing and reduces it to instrumental value Conscious being or consciousness of being, as it is given to man, enhances the significance of man's being Even without any other considerable content of being, it implicitly confirms the value of mere being, e g in case of infants and primitive men It is by virtue of this absolute concious being that numerous men live the most unenviable life and endure sufferings which seem to others as depriving man of the simplest raison d'etre in life

Bliss constitutes the deeper significance and higher or greater value of life Its superiority and greatness is evident in its inner experience to every one It is experienced that all other values become valueless without joy Value consists in the complexity and integrality of constitutive dimensions of being Mere being without consciousness and bliss, is simplest being and thus lowest in the axiological scale Consciousness is dualistic (i e non-integral) in its cognitive function, but it is integral in its implicit confirmation of conscious being of man It is in this integrality of consciousness that the value of man's conscious being consists Bliss also is perhaps incorporated in this integral consciousness of being at least in some measure, and thus enhances the value of conscious being There is some joy in implicit and integral consciousness of being and this joy sustains man in the most adverse and unendurable conditions of life The integrality and joy of conscious being is compromised by the context of objective duality, which is inevitable in cognitive consciousness When this objective duality is comprehended and even transcended in a higher integrality, bliss manifests itself in its higher form in life It is not merely another category of being distinct from neutral being of inanimate things or dualistic conscious being, but it is higher mode of being, which comprehends being and consciousness and transcends both into a higher integrality and greater excellence This bliss is found in the Upanishads to be the highest essence of reality and also

of life It endows life and objects with value and enhances their axiological status

Consciousness and Bliss are the principles through which metaphysical reality of Brahman is axiologically related to life There are evident indications of this relation in the Upanishads The cosmological statements of the Upanishads also contain these axiological indications. The Brahman, when it is propounded as the ultimate source of creation, is immediately asserted as the support and sustenance of life This axiological indication is contained in the cosmological statement of the Taittiriya Upanishad[4] and in that of the Brahma Sutra which re-states it,[5] though it is ignored in the dominantly cosmological arguments of the Sutras and the Commentaries thereupon The non-cosmological Upanishads, like the Isha Upanishad, announce this axiological dimension of reality as the supreme destiny of man also They exhort man to look at the Universe of objects as comprehended in supreme spiritual reality and to aspire this comprehension as the axiological destiny of life[6] This naturally will inspire man to attain continence, moderation, peace, love and service, and will direct mankind towards realization of the Kingdom of God on the earth

Thus the characterization of reality as Consciousness and Bliss in the Upanishads is not without implications of its axiological significance in life Reality as bliss is the supreme value i e value of values It endows other things of life with value and enhances their axiological substance and status Besides

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4 यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति ।
तैत्तिरीय० ३-१

5 जन्माद्यस्य यतः । ब्रह्मसूत्र १-१-२

6 ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्या जगत् । तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः ।
ईश० १

this supreme spiritual value as the criterion and content of value, many other particular values are recognised and mentioned in the Upanishads. A survey of the Upanishads from the point of view of these particular values, as undertaken in the next chapter, will reveal the concrete and secular axiology of the Upanishads Such a survey will also dispel the common illusion that the Upanishads propound a totally transcendental and world-negating philosophy according to which the world and life are unreal and secular values which in the common view, constitute the content of life are fundamentally valueless. Such a view has been popularized by scholars of India and the West both through one sided and exclusive emphasis on transcendental aspect of Upanishadic thought A few statements which suggest devaluation of secular values have been taken exclusively, while numerous statements, which evidently affirm the importance of secular values in life, have been either ignored or have been interpreted with a qualification which is not warranted by the text The second verse of the Isha Upanishad is an example, which exhorts man to devote to action for a hundred years in life and in the commentary upon which Shankaracharya has added the qualification that 'exhortation to action is intended for the ignorant' To ignore such evident statements is an error of fact To interpret them with a qualification is a logical necessity for Shankaracharya He found a contradiction between the nature of reality as immutable and as transcendent of time and that of phenomenal existence and life The contradiction is real but the Upanishads themselves do not regard it as ultimate. They suggest a coherence of these two apparently contradictory principles of immovable reality and dynamic phenomena, and find former to be the foundation of the latter[7] They also regard the supreme spiritual reality, besides being the metaphysical foundation of the phenomena, as the axiological basis of them They treat it as the supreme principle which imparts value to

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7 तदेजति तन्न एजति । ईश० ५

all secular and social phenomena of life.[8] The real metaphysics of the Vedanta is, however mystical it may be, a coherence of two apparently contradictory principles of transcendent reality and temporal phenomena It is in this coherence that we find the undeniable value of secular and social phenomena of life

## 2. Secular values in the Upanishads

The foremost among these secular values is food The importance of food and with that of water also is recognised in the Upanishads at so many places that it would be a gross error of judgment to regard the Upanishads as world-denying and life-denying Instead of denying or derogating the world and worldly life, the Upanishad, on the other hand, enhance the value of worldly life They propound a principle of transvaluation of values i e of spiritualization of secular values whereby these values are enriched in quality by a new dimension of spirituality.

The importance of food, as necessary for living, is recognised in the Prashna, the Taittiriya, the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads Some smaller Upanishads are so brief and theoretical that there is no occasion in them for the assertion or denial of any particular values But the general principles of the Isha, Kena, and the Mandukya Upanishads evidently support the importance of secular values of food, sex, physical strength etc Grain and food find an elaborate treatment in the Taittiriya Upanishad from which our national government has adopted the motto for its 'grow more food' campaign with all its scriptural sanctity.[9] The Chhandogya Upanishad contains two remarkable anecdotes which illustrate the crucial value of food for physical living as well as spiritual life. Sage Ushasti realized the importance of food at the point of starvation from which

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8 आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति । छां० ४-५-६

9 अन्नं वहु कुर्वीत । तैत्तिरीय० ३-९

he could save himself and his young wife only by begging food from an elephant driver[10] Shwetaketu, son of sage Aruni, observed a fast for a fortnight and became extremely feeble. Then his father advised him to take food and explained to him the value of food in these words: 'Food is the fuel of life, as fire fades without fuel, so also life fades without food[11] The Brihadaranyaka and the Prashna Upanishads recognise food as the source of vital strength which according to the Mundaka is the necessary basis of spiritual life[12] Thus the importance of the fundamental secular value of food is duly recognised in the Upanishads The Isha Upanishad announces, in its very first verse, the principle of spiritual elevation of these secular values through moderation, continence and direct coordination of them with the supreme value of the spirit

Like food, the secular value of sex also is given due recognition in the Upanishads The amount of interest which the Upanishads take in sex, not for indulgence but for the co-ordination of a vital principle of life with cultural and spiritual life, will be surprising to those who believe the Upanishads to be ascetic and puritanic It is true that the Upanishads prescribe restraint and regulation of sex, but they do not prescribe such extreme abstenance from it as is demanded by an ascetic and puratanic attitude of life The moderation which the Upanishads prescribe is not incoherent with normal sex life Nowhere, in the Upanishads, do we find any suggestion for repression or denial of sex, as became customary in the post-Buddhistic ascetic view of life The Prashna Upanishad supports a normal sex-life and confers upon regulated sex-life the exalted title of Brahmacharya which is rendered as celebacy and is commonly

10 छान्दोग्य उपनिषद १-११-५

11 छान्दोग्य उपनिषद ६-७-३

12 बृहदारण्यक० ५-१२-१ । मुण्डक ३-२

associated with abstenance of sex-life[13] Moderate sex-life is regarded as consistent with Tapas or penance and is likened to the divine principle of generation embodied in Prajapati[14]

The value of sex is sanctified in the Taittiriya Upanishad in its clear assertion of the superiority of the mother, which is a notable characteristic of the cultural tradition of India The disciple, at the time of departing after spiritual training is instructed to revere mother (and father also) and to marry and carry on the tradition of generation[15] The Aitareya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads contain veritable gospels of generation. The Aitareya Upanishad glorifies pregnancy and motherhood and enjoins upon society to give highest honour, regard, care and consideration to the pregnant woman.[16] The Chhandogya Upanishad contains a glorification of the principle of progeny[17] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad regards sex-organs as the seat of all delight in life[18] All Upanishads urge regulation of sex, but the one importance of sex is duly recognised in them, specially in the context of motherhood and generation

Other secular values recognised in the Upanishads are body, physical strength, vital being, senses, mind, wealth etc They are secular in the sense that they are evidently empirical and there is nothing occult or super-natural about them The Shantipaths of several Upanishads contain a profound prayer for phy-

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13 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद्यद्रात्री रत्या संयुज्यन्ते । प्रश्न० १-१३

14 प्रश्न उप० १-१४

15 मातृ देवो भव, पितृदेवो भव, प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सी ।
तैत्तिरीय० १-११

16 सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति । ऐतरेय० २-१-३

17 अस्य कुले वीरो जायते । छां० ३-१३-६

18 सर्वेषामानन्दानामुपस्थ एकायनम् । वृह० २-४-११

sical and sensory excellence of the body. The Shvetashwatara Upanishad regards body as a necessary instrument for spiritual realization[19] The Mundaka Upanishad considers physical strength as a necessary condition for spiritual realization.[20] Physical soundness depends on vital power which is discovered in the Upanishads as the basis of life The Prashna Upanishad deals with vital power in two chapters It regards vital power as superior and fundamental to all other elements which sustain life[21] The vital power, according to it, is the axle of life around which all other modes of life are centred like spokes[22] It is the central source of life The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads also support the supremacy of vital power as the source of strength and of sustenance of all other sense-organs of man[23] The soundness of sense-organs is glorified in the Shanti-path of several Upanishads The Kena Upanishad gives due importance to them, though it regards supreme spirit as the supreme sustaining force behind them The Taittiriya Upanishad cherishes the sweetness of tongue, which is basically a sensory quality[24]

The material and physical basis of mind is recognised in the Chhandogya Upanishad which suggests that mind is made of the finer element in food[25] The story of Yajnavalkya as found in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, in which he accepts the cows with golden horns from the King Janaka supports the

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19 श्वेताश्वतर० १-४

20 नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः। मुण्डक० ३-२-४

21 तान्वरिष्ठ प्राण उवाच। प्रश्न० २-३

22 अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम्। प्रश्न० २-६

23 छान्दोग्य० १-१५-५। बृहदारण्यक० १-३-१९

24 जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा। तैत्तिरीय० १-४

25 छान्दोग्य० ६-५-१

importance of wealth in life,[26] though according to the Upanishads and also to any sound view of life wealth is only a means of life The Upanishad suggest a spiritualization of wealth and all other means of life[27]

Thus we find that important secular values are duly recognised in the Upanishads, without any such reservation or qualification which may reduce them to unreality as it happened in the later Advaita Vedanta that developed after Shankaracharya

**3. Social Values in the Upanishads**

Though the Upanishadic philosophy is believed to be dominantly ascetic, social values are not disregarded in it The sages of the Upanishads lived a normal domestic life with their wife and children They devoted themselves to the quest of spiritual reality, but they cherished, in this context, affectionate relationship with their children and disciples They attached great importance to the education of spirit and imparted it to their children and disciples Disciples lived with them in their hermitages like their sons Social relationships, particularly parental and preceptorial relationships are highly glorified in the Upanishads. The regard for father is exemplified in the conduct of Nachiketas who went to the God of Death at the command of his father (Katha Upanishad). The Taitiriya Upanishad enjoins upon young graduates, returning home after the completion of their spiritual education, to regard their parents with religious reverence[28] The mother is given primacy over the father in Indian tradition. Traces of this outlook are found in the Upanishads The Aitareya Upanishad glorifies the pregnant mother

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26 वृहदारण्यक० ४-१-१

27 ईशावास्यमिदं ईश० १

28 मातृ देवो भव। तैत्तिरीय० १-११-२

and instructs men to afford her utmost regard and care.[29] The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads also bestow great appreciation upon woman particularly as wife.

Along with the adoration of woman, progeny is given the appreciation it deserved in the ancient society with scanty population Appreciation of progeny is the original Vedic view of life which finds a spiritual motive in the Upanishads. Vedic people prayed for progeny with the defensive and agricultural motive The seers of the Upanishads desire progeny for maintaining the tradition of spiritual learning in society, though, in keeping with the Vedic tradition, they also wish their woman to be mothers of heroic children.[30] The spiritual learning was regarded so precious that sages imparted it in great confidence only to their elder sons or to devoted disciples.[31] Aruna, a great sage, initiates his son Bhrigu in Spiritual quest[32] Many stories of devoted disciples who lived with their preceptors in their forest hermitages like their sons and received parental affection from the teacher and his wife, are found in the Upanishads

The teacher occupies a place of great honour in the Indian tradition due to the great importance of learning in ancient India The importance and popularity of learning in such ancient times is surprising The importance and prestige of the teacher is enhanced by the peculiarly spiritual and esoteric discipline which formed the foundation of ancient Indian educa-

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29 सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या । एतरेय० २-१-३

30 अस्य कुले वीरो जायते । छा० ३-१३-६
सा त्व वीरवती भव । बृह० ६-४-२८

31 इदं वाव ज्येष्ठाय पुत्राय पिता ब्रह्म प्रब्रूयात् प्रणाय्याय वान्तेवासिने ।
छां० ३-११-५

32 सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम् । तैत्तिरीय० १-१

tion. Therefore the teacher comes next to parents in regard to importance and honour to be paid.

These are the main social relations which are recognised in the Upanishads and are given due importance by their authors The stranger, or the guest as he is called, finds a place of special honour in Indian tradition The tradition developed in the circumstances of travelling by individuals in extensive plains sparsely spotted with habitations, but it is a sign of the profound humanity of the Indian people The guest was considered to be godly and was given a most hospitable treatment in the house. He was given food and shelter The homage of Yama to Nachiketas, who waited for three days at the door of Yama, is an evidence of Indian hospitality at the highest level Yama grants three boons to Nachiketas for compensating his fault in not being able to attend to the guest (Nachiketas) immediately as he was out of station and for keeping him waiting, though unknowingly, for three days This ancient Indian tradition of hospitality has become a marked feature of Indian courtesy and culture and continues even today with great sincerity when it is not so necessary As a regard for the stranger, it is an evidence of profound humanism of the Indian view of social life and is an evidence of the Upanishadic regard of social value in life.

The deep humanism of Indian view of life finds its foundation in the humanistic expressions of smaller Upanishads in which there is no room for the mention of any specific social relationships primarily for the reason of their brevity and also of their specifically spiritual theme The Isha Upanishad, which is among the smallest Upanishads and is perhaps the only Upanishad which is directly a part of a Vedic Samhita, is most notable for its deep and wide social humanism Its initial injunction for a moderate and active life itself implies a profound social humanism On the basis of this humanism it proceeds to propound love and non-hatred as the cardinal principle of hu-

man life Hate is the greatest social evil It has been at the root of all conflict between individuals and groups. It is caused by unspirituality and consequent alienation of others. Spirituality promotes affiliation and love and affords a primary basis of cordiality of social relationships and for social values which sustain them.

The spiritual depths of the social relationships, both general and particular, are to be noted in such statements as are found in the Taittiriya Upanishad in which the sages pray for social fulfilment of their spiritual aspirations e g. for attaining spiritual glory[32] It deeply co-ordinates social values and overrules all such disregard for social relationships as may be implied in some statements of other Upanishads which are adduced as an evidence for the unsocial or anti-social character of the Upanishads

The spiritual secret of social relationship is revealed in the diagnosis of love in the Isha Upanishad and of fear in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad The Isha Upanishad reveals that hatred is caused by a sense of otherness i e alienation: when one feels one-ness with others there remains no reason for hatred and love spontaneously overflows from the heart of a person.[33] This love and non-hatred is the general basis of all social values and social-relationships in which they concretely materialize The spiritual secret of social values is revealed by the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the negative context of fear. Fear involves alienation We are afraid of the 'other' person i.e. when we harbour a feeling of otherness or alienation from him[34] We feel afraid when we encounter a stranger in wilderness or in loneliness. But it is asked why should one fear when one is alone? We feel afraid in solitude. Prajapati felt afraid

33 ईश उपनिषद् ६, ७

34 द्वितीयाद्वै भय भवति । बृह० १-४-२

and found no joy in loneliness So he created the world of manifold creatures in order to enjoy himself with them[35] As Prajapati felt afraid in solitude, so man also feels afraid when he is lonely[36] But whom does he fear when he is alone[37] The spiritual secret of fear will be understood when we relate fear and joy as opposite counterparts Fear is lack of joy and of inner strength which joy of spiritual affiliation and unity affords us Joy is the strength of spiritual and social affiliation and unity. It wards off fear by removing weakness of loneliness Spiritual unity (i e non-duality) is the cardinal principle of social existence Except in solitude or in deep conflict, socio-spiritual cordiality is present in some measure and form in every human situation It reveals unity and affiliation and expresses in joy, which contains inner strength in its core That is why man likes amiable company and finds solace even in the neutral amorphous crowds of cities and social gatherings Negatively he feels afraid when left in loneliness by circumstances

The spiritual dimension of social value is to be deeply explored in the context of existential crisis of modern civilization It will be found that the above Upanishadic diagnosis of fear indicates a way out of the existential crisis in which modern man appears to have been engulfed by the deepening alienation which has been growing with the urban and industrial civilization

### 4. Ethical Values in the Upanishads

Social values grow into ethical values They imply ethical values and give them concrete modes in social conduct All ethical values are also social in the context of their practice in con-

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35 एकाकी न रमते स द्वितीयमैच्छत् । वृह० १-८-३

36 वृह० १-४-२

37 यन्मदन्यन्नास्ति कस्मान्नु विभेमि । वृह० १-४-२

duct Ethical values are virtues which are to be observed in social conduct But they are regarded as specifically ethical in the context of their acquisition and discipline They are acquired by individuals in course of moral discipline and they adorn their personality as cultural accomplishments.

Though, according to some scholars, Upanishadic metaphysics propounds an ultimate reality which is beyond good and evil, and the realization of such reality is the highest goal of life, many cardinal ethical values are recognised in the Upanishads The ultimate value of moral conduct according to the Upanishads depends on the actual relation of action and goodness with the supreme spiritual reality. This relation is a matter of deep philosophic consideration. It has been discussed in the Upanishads also but there are indications in the Upanishads that this relation is real and there is no considerable evidence in the Upanishads that they consider ethical values as valueless On the other hand they give importance to ethical values and consider them not only as conducive to but as necessary for spiritual realization.

Several cardinal ethical values are recognised in the Upanishads and are considered as essential for spiritual realization. The notable ethical values among them are truth, penance, celebacy, moderation, faith, love, calmness etc Truth is a wide term and signifies a comprehensive view of reality in which logical and ethical values also are included. The metaphysical truth is ultimate and other modes of truth can be treated as aspects of it The Upanishadic view of truth is comprehensive and tends towards the metaphysical and the spiritual The ultimate reality, according to the Upanishads, is spiritual, but it is not entirely transcendental It is transcendent in the sense of being above good and evil i e it is not affected by them, but it is not only consonant with good but supports and sustains it. Good is the integral nature of reality[38] Observance of good is

38 शान्त शिवम् । माण्डूक्य० ७

conducive to the realization of spiritual reality. Good is spiritual and evil is unspiritual Involvement in evil is detrimental to spiritual realization The Katha Upanishad emphatically asserts the imperativeness of good for spiritual realization and strongly declares the adverse relation of evil with spirit[39] The Chhandogya Upanishad identifies the good with truth as it is done in Geek thought by Socrates and Plato[40] Truth may be higher and wider than good, and good may not be purely intellectual as Socrates thought, but good is certainly true and an important dimension of wider truth The truth which is deemed to be ultimately victorious in the Mundaka Upanishad,[41] from which our national motto has been adopted, is certainly a more comprehensive truth than intellectual truth. It is the truth of life and not merely the truth of thought or speech As the Upanishads are not dominantly intellectual, the truth which is regarded as an important virtue in the context of spiritual discipline is not the mere intellectual truth but wider spiritual truth with an ethical emphasis It is mentioned as a cardinal virtue required for spiritual advancement in the Mundaka, Taittiriya and Chhandogya Upanishads[42]

Truth possesses an intellectual reflection in its meaning in so far as it is expressed in thought and speech Hence it has been popularly identified with truth speaking Speech is the common medium of common intercourse and truth is largely revealed in it The veracity of thought and speech is tested in conduct The Prashna Upanishad treats truth in this sense of veracity of speech and righteousness of conduct[43] Shankaracharya has explained it as absence of crookedness in thought, speech and conduct. Moral truth is tentamount to harmony of

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39 नाविरतो दुश्चरितात् । कठ० १-२-२४

40 यो वै स धर्म· सत्यम् । वृह० १-४-१४

41 सत्यमेव जयते । मुण्डक० ३-१-६

42 मुण्डक० ३-१-६, तैत्तिरीय० १-११ छान्दोग्य० ३-१७-४

43 न येषु जिह्ममनृतम् । प्रश्न० १-१६

thought, speech and conduct Crookedness creates discord in these and leads to evil. Truth is transparency of mind and rectitude of conduct. Concealment and crookedness are basic cause of evil.

The general good which follows from this comprehensive concept of truth and from which all particular ethical values emanate like branches from a tree, is indicated emphatically in the Katha and other Upanishads. The Katha Upanishad considers the good as distinct from the pleasant which tempts us into evil[44] Thus the ethics of the Upanishads is anti-hedonic. It does not condemn the moderate pleasures of life, but it is certainly opposed to indulgence It prescribes moderation of sense-life and looks at pleasures with suspicion, as they tempt us into indulgence and evil. The supreme spirit is essentially good according to the Mandukya Upanishad[45] and is viewed to be above evil.[46] It is not fraught with evil and realization of spirit leads man to freedom from evil[46] It is not fraught with evil and realization of spirit leads man to freedom from evil.[47] The general attitude of goodness is spiritual, as it is above the alienating modes of ego and intellect and contains force of affiliation by virtue of its intrinsic altruism It leads to affiliation with others and detracts one from harbouring hatred, which is the root of all evil[48]

The attitude of truthfulness and general goodness, both of which follow from spirituality, flourish in the specific ethical values which are treated in the Upanishads as not only conducive but even essential for spiritual realization. The widest among these specific ethical values is faith

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44 अन्यच्छ्रेयः अन्यदुदेव प्रेयः। कठ० १-२-१

45 शान्तं शिवम्। माण्डूक्य० ७

46 अपापविद्धम्। ईश० ८

47 केन० ४-६

48 ततो न विजुगुप्सते। ईश० ६

(Shraddha). Religious faith is generally found to be blind and dogmatic But the Sanskrit Shraddha contains subtle and deep ingradients of understanding, reverence, devotion etc. which save it from being blind and dogmatic Both blindness and dogmacy of faith become evil only when we try to impose articles of our faith on others Faith is essentially our own conviction and concern It is ultra-wires and transgression of the limit of faith to try to impose it over others We can believe and worship as we please It is desecrating the sanctity of our own faith, if we assert ourselves to impose our faith on others All religious evil has resulted from this lack of understanding and observing faith in the really religious spirit. If we keep our faith to ourselves, the defects of irrationality and dogmacy will be soon exposed. Personal faith is easily self-corrective. It is only in social imposition that it tends to glorify evil.

The Shraddha of the Upanishads is spiritual and not religious faith It is personal conviction of reality as our inmost being and not a communal credence in an objective Being called God In its core it is even rational (i e not irrational). It is supre-rational only in so far as it is a personal conviction in an inner reality and experience which transcends intellect, reason and speech. It is trust in an integral truth based on glimpses of it seen in personal experience and in the life of the preceptor. The purpose of faith is not to aggravate our zeal to impose it on others, but to intensify our own efforts in the direction of the discipline which leads to our spiritual goal Such faith leads to glory and greatness in life,[49] unlike the dogmatic religious faith which leads to degradation of both God and man through brutal atrocities of fanatic imposition baptised as conversion in religion.

This spiritual faith is explicitly emphasised in the Prashna, Mundaka, Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads[50] But

49 श्रद्धया सम्पन्नो महिमानमनुभवति । प्रश्न० ५-३

50 प्रश्न० ५-३, मुण्डक० १-२-११ वृह० ३-९-२१ वृह० ६-२-४

it is implicit in other Upanishads and in the whole attitude of spiritual discipline enjoined upon aspirants of truth in these Upanishads.

Tapas, inadequately rendered as penance, marks the austere tone of the spiritual disciplne demanded of the seekers of truth in the Upanishads Penance has a penitant and pessimistic reflection in its meaning. Tapas is a positive spiritual discipline which consists in withdrawal of energy from diffusion in outer activities of life and in inward intensification of energy for the purpose of inner spiritual realization and for utilization of conserved energy in social good. Its negative austerity is only apparent and external Really and internally it is cultivation and consolidation of divine spiritual power. It is understood to be the divine power by which divine reality creates and maintains the universe[51]. Tapas in man is akin to the divine power of supreme being It connotes both the end and the means As an end its signifies the divine power As a means it constitutes the cardinal discipline which is conducive to spiritual realization. It is emphasised in the Kena, Prashna, Mundaka, Taittiriya, Chhandogya and Svetashvatara Upanishads as the first and the foremost step towards spiritual discipline. Sage Varuna instructs his son Bhrigu to observe Tapas for realization of Brahman He affirms that Tapas is the very nature of spiritual reality.[52]

All other specific ethical virtues follow from the austerity implied in the principle and conduct of Tapas All evil follows from indulgence in pleasures of senses and in consequent arrogance of nature A hedonic attitude leads to arrogance of nature, which is the initial cause of all evil. Tapas is devoted effort, inspired by spiritual faith, to counteract this tendency to evil by turning man's mind and motivation in the opposite direction

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51 तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयते। प्रश्न० १.४

52 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व। तपो ब्रह्मेति। तैत्तिरीय० ३-२

of withdrawn, continence and moderation Virtue is the positive fruit of the negative austerity implied in Tapas Examples of exaggeration of Tapas are known in Indian tradition in general and in the Upanishads also But that is an exaggeration of truth, unlike evil which is an exaggeration of what is wrong Exaggerations of good are like lofty light houses which are intended to direct the path of aspirants of truth and to inspire them in their reluctance to advance on it, which is so natural due to the hardships and hazards of a spiritual voyage.

Moderation in general and in the particular form of restraint of senses is prescribed in several Upanishads Brahmacharya, very inadequately rendered as celebacy, is mentioned in several Upanishads as a cardinal form of this restraint. General moderation is prescribed in the very first verse of the Isha Upanishad which can be treated as the first among the Upanishads It instructs man to look at the whole world of obpects as the gift of God, and to enjoy things with restraint, keeping human urges in consonance with faith in the all-pervasiveness of divine spiritual reality. The virtues of non-hatred, love, calmness etc which are emphasised in subsequent verses of the Isha Upanishad and in other Upanishads also are possible to be cultivated only with moderation in sensory and natural life Tapas is the austere personal discipline which generates power of restraint against temptations of nature Brahmacharya is also a kind of Tapas It is the reflection of the discipine of Tapas in conduct In a wider sense it signifies the adoption of a spiritual altitude in life in the context of all secular values and natural urges. It is the spiritualization of natural life as it is intended in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad Brahmacharya has come to be identified with celebacy or with strict restraint of sexual urge, as sex is the most impelling of all natural urges and sexual temptation happens to be the cause of many evils in life. Wars have been fought for women and sexual atrocities of invaders, particularly on India, are supreme examples of man's wilful proneness to sexual aberration Sexual laxi-

ty becomes the cause of domestic and personal unhappiness. Indian tradition has enjoined upon women observation of chastity with an exclusive emphasis, but it has prescribed continence for man with an equally exclusive emphasis, as men are more prone to sexual laxity and indulgence than women The sexual urge of women is compromised by the exigencies of motherhood which is woman's exclusive prerogative granted by nature to her Sex is the crux of nature and observance of sexual continence, specially by men, marks the turning point of man's life in his march towards spiritualization of life. It will naturally lead to conjugal fidelity which is glorified in the Chhandogya Upanishad in King Ashwapati's proud declaration about the economic and sexual morality of his people [53] This peculiarly Indian moral value of Brahmacharya has been emphasised in the Prashna, Mundaka, Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads

These ethical values constitute the pillars of righeousness in life,[54] which is the condition and context of the spiritualization of natural life The Supreme spirit and spiritual life is deemed to be completely free from evil Therefore dissolution of evil through moral and spiritual discipline is necessary for the attainment of spiritual realization in life. One who has not reframed from evil conduct and has not attained complete composure of mind thereby cannot expect to enter the divine realm of spiritual realization [55] The Taittiriya Upanishad declares that all evil is dissolved in the event of spiritual realization [56] The path of Godhood lies through goodness. Evil is an impediment in spiritual progress and is to be abandoned before one should

53 छान्दोग्य० ५-११-५

54 त्रयो धर्मस्कन्धाः। छान्दोग्य० २-२३-१

55 नाविरतो दुश्चरितात् नाऽशान्तो नाऽसमाहितः। नाऽशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात्। कठ० १-३-२४

56 तैत्तिरीय० २-९

venture to march on the path of spiritual salvation which is the supreme goal of human life

The question of the technical discrepancies that arise in the context of relating morality to the spiritual metaphysics of the Upanishads is a delicate and difficult one It deserves to be treated deeply in the light of the difficulties raised by Shankaracharya and his followers

**5. Intellectual and Aesthetic values in the Upanishads**

General axiology recognises some other values of life besides the secular, social and ethical values described above with reference to the Upanishads We have described the secular, social and ethical values, as they find place in the Upanishads, particularly because the common view of scholars, which presents the Upanishadic philosophy as a dominantly ascetic and world denying spiritualism, gives an impression as if there is no place for these values in the Upanishads Our description of these values according to the Upanishads will show how prominent a place do these values occupy in the Upanishads The ethical values have been described by us to indicate their importance in the spiritual metaphysics of the Upanishads

All these values are to be organised according to the supreme spiritual principle which is also the supreme value, as will be explained in the last section of this chapter. In fact these values derive their value from the spiritual dimension with which they are integrated and they culminate in ultimate spiritual realization which is the final end of life. Spirituality is the supreme value, the value of values and the principle of transvaluation and fulfilment of all other values

Among other values recognised in general axiology of modern times, besides the secular, social and ethical values, three are distinctly notable The intellectual value, among these, pertains to knowledge It has been given great importance in

Indian cultural tradition Perhaps in no other ancient society did there exist such a widely popular and intellectually profound tradition of learning as existed in India in the most ancient times. No where else, in such ancient times, such a vast community constituting the cream of society, devoted so exclusively to learning that it became almost identical with life and living

Knowledge and learning are directed towards truth. Truth is the quest and goal of knowledge. Learning is the social tradition through which this quest and love of truth becomes a continuous concern of a people. The Upanishads are in fact an ancient culmination of this quest of knowledge, which surprisingly enough reached its end in the revelation of spiritual reality in such early times The Upanishads also give due importance to learning, knowledge and truth, but they are dominantly spiritual treatises which regard reality as spiritual and supra-rational, and understand truth in a meta-physical rather than intellectual sense Intellect is rational and the knowledge it obtains is objective and dualistic The spiritual reality is subjective and non-dualistic. It is to be realized in integral experience. The dualistic knowledge obtained by intellect can neither render it, nor is it adequate for attaining it This spiritual reality is therefore, beyond thought and speech It is revealed in the serene silence of integral experience Bliss is its distinct dimension which is beyond the scope of intellect and thought Hence logic and reason have been dubbed in the Upanishads as inadequate for the attainment of spiritual realization.[57] The Katha and the Mundaka Upanishads declare that the spiritual realization cannot be attained by reason, nor by much learning.[58] The divine sage Narada laments in the Chhandogya Upanishad that he has

57 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया। कठ० १-२-९

58 नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यः न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन।
कठ० १-२-२३, मुण्डक० ३-२-३

mastered all the scriptures and sciences, yet he has not attained the peace of mind Sage Sanat Kumar instructs him that sorrows of life are transcended only in self-realization [59]

The disciples who lived with their preceptors in forest hermitages were no doubt intellectually initiated in the scriptural learning, but it was treated only as an initial guidance on the spiritual path on which they had to progress by moral and spiritual discipline It can be said that the ethical values are given greater importance in the Upanishads than the intellectual value of knowledge. The truth as conceived in the Upanishads also is more of a moral rectitude than an intellectual acquisition Ultimate truth is spiritual in the acquisition of which intellectual understanding is an impediment rather than an aid. Intellectual knowledge is not considered important in the Upanishads due to their dominantly spiritual motive Intellectual pursuit of scientific or even philosophical knowledge and of truth for its own sake is not consequently encouraged in them. The intellect is considered as a medium of regulating mind and sense-organs for moral conduct, but in this task of regulation of life the intellect has to serve under the guidance of spirit which is the supreme master of life This idea is presented in the Katha Upanishad with the help of the analogy of a chariot according to which the senses are like horses, mind is like reins, intellect is like the driver who should drive the chariot according to the intention and instructions of spirit who is the hero [60]

The aesthetic value is conspicuous in the Upanishads by its complete absence It is remarkable that there is no mention of Beauty at all in the Upanishads The word (Beauty) does not occur in any of the older Upanishads which constitute the basic text of the Vedanta It appears as if the sages of the Upani-

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59 छान्दोग्य ७-१-२, ३

60 कठ० १-३-३ तथा आगे ।

shads were entirely unaware of or unconcerned with the idea of Beauty in any form. It is not conceived by them even as an aspect or attribute of supreme reality as it is done later in Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions of religion and thought It is surprising for the inheritors of the religio-poetical tradition of the Rigveda which is overflowing with the admiration of natural beauty and abounds in fascinating poetic descriptions of it The reason of this aesthetic indifference of Upanishadic sages is to be deeply explored One possible reason can be their exclusive occupation with spiritual experience and their slight concern with expression. Beauty is essentially the quality of expression, whether it be the expression of objective modes or of artistic creations. It is in the context of expressive dimension of reality that Beauty comes to be adored in the Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions of religion The Upanishads decry concrete expression of realitiy in any adorative form,[61] as adoration implies a duality. The intimate and integral experience, inexpressible in any form, is the ultimate reality according to the Upanishads. Beauty has an intimate, though it may be only incidental, reference to women. The Upanishads no doubt honour women particularly as mothers, but no where at all the sages seem to be impressed by the beauty of women or even obsessed by love of woman, though they lived a married life. If they are not averve to women, they are not at all aesthetically or emotionally inclined towards them They were rather indifferent to women and beauty both. They had no place for art or romantic emotion in their view of life, which was inclined towards austerity. Romance is an indulgence in sensual fancy which they sought to restrain. Art is indulgence in creation of variety of forms Their attitude was substantive and spiritual in which admiration of beauty and indulgence in arts has no place

The unaesthetic attitude of Upanishadic sages represents only the austere outlook of one class of ancient Indian people,

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61 नेदं यदिदमुपासते । केन० १-४

which loved contemplative life in the forest hermitages The earliest Vedic Indians and their successors, except for the Upanishadic sages and the class of saints which was created in India by the influence of Upanishadic Vedanta, Jainism and Buddhism, had a fine aesthetic sense, loved ardently beauty and art in every form They enjoyed a life of popular culture which was embellished by dancing, singing and other modes of art and which was completely ignored by the religio-spiritual sects that preached and practised an ascetic life under the above mentioned influences

The recreational values also have no place in the Upanishads. These values pertain to sport and enjoyment The Upanishadic discipline was too sober to allow any room for them. Neither the preceptors nor the disciples seem to have any need of it. What relieved and refreshed them in their highly serious and sober life is difficult to understand Intense intellectualism, ascetic austerity of their attitude and substantive seriousness in life seems to have led them to an utter neglect of the values of recreation, alongwith aesthetic values Like Beauty, values of recreation also were recognised in their divine depths in the Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions where they were attributed to the Divine Creative Power, symbolized as the female counterpart of Reality. Both beauty and sport constitute integral dimensions of divine reality and are conspicuous in the mode of divine life presented to man as the supreme model of life Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, is the emblem of Divine Beauty The Shakti of Shiva is given the name of Sundari (i.e Beauty). Both Shiva and Krishna present dance and sport as the divine model of human life. Recreation is not only casual and incidental in this view of life, but it is the deepest truth of life integral to it, which at its highest should be activity without causal determination, sport without strain and enjoyment without any utilitarian motive. The Lasya of Shiva and the Rasa of Krishna are not casual pastimes of divinities but supreme models for a perfect life Krishna is known not only for his moonlight dances on the bank of Jumna with his male and female comrades, but also for his sports with

stick and ball with young cowherds and many other sportive and recreative activities some of which, like that with the Kaliya serpent, involved adventures of the most daring kind.

### 6. Religious and Spiritual Values

The religious and spiritual values are distinct from the secular and intellectual values The former pertain to God which is believed to be a transcendental reality to be accepted in faith and the latter concerns with spirit which is a reality beyond secular modes of existence and the approach of intellect and reason If not by faith like God, the spirit is to realized in super-sensuous and super-intellectual experience The moral, social and aesthetic values may have some kinship and relation with religious and spiritual values according to the view taken about them Religious value has been fundamental and primary since primitive times and has expressed itself in faith in some kind of super-sensible reality This faith ranges from primitive animism to various congregational creeds that arose during the last 2500 years Spiritualism has been vaguely apprehended in various cultures of the world, but has been most deeply and profoundly pursued only in Upanishadic approach to life and the religio-philosophical schools that followed from Upanishads

All religions has been congregational in some form and measure Some of them have been more organised and psychologically and even physically aggressive. It is difficult to understand how organization, conversion and more than these aggression, is related to the substance and spirit of religion Eastern religions are not evidently theistic, but they are avowedly humanistic Therefore they have never been aggressive. Except for Buddhism they have not been even emphatically missionary. Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Zorastrianism all are marked by deep compassion for man. The Western religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam have been organized and even aggressive, inspite of their avowed theism In fact it is on the

point of faith in one God that they have been both psychologically and physically aggressive This is a very surprising and shocking consequence of faith in a merciful and benevolent God The reason of this seems to be that spiritualism in the sense of personal realization of spiritual reality could not be the governing force or the guiding principle of these religions Concrete spiritual conviction and experience cannot be contradicted by psychological or physical violence, but hypothetical faith in a transcendent God can easily be thus contradicted, and more so when it is emphatic without being reinforced by real spiritual experience Eastern religions could not be aggressive because they were not inspired by zeal of a hypothetical theism and were more disposed to humanism

Jainism, Buddhism, Zorastrianism and Confucianism originated on the Himalayan peripheries of India. The central Indian religions grew with the background of cultural-spiritualism of the Vedic tradition The popular Indian faith continued to flourish under the inspiration of this cultural spiritualism The non-cultural spiritualism of the Upanishads inspired the faith of people intellectually disposed or influenced by the ascetism of Jainism and Buddhism The domestic and ascetic trends of faith are fused and largely confused in the later religious tradition of India The Upanishads mark the beginning of this fusion, more inclined towards confusion and emphasis on asceticism But in substance Upanishads contain the deepest and highest truth of religion and of life also in the form of a sublime spiritualism, which promotes experience of spiritual reality by personal discipline and diffusion of its divine blessings in society If understood correctly and observed sincerely this spiritualism can be consistent with any right form of religion, though it is not originally and intrinsically inclined towards any religious doctrine or dogmatism

If religion is to be characterized by dogmatic creed of any kind, like faith in a prophet, book or a specific conception of God, the Upanishads are conspicuously devoid of any religious

character. If congregation and conversion are essentials of religion the Upanishads are distinctly opposed to it. But they contain the core of religion in the form of a sound and deep spiritualism which is the real essence of religion that can show honest people the way to real salvation Religion, in any credal, dogmatic, ritual or prophetic form is not to be found in the Upanishads. But the Upanishads are essentially spiritual and spirtuality is the core of religion

In fact spirituality is the core of morality or ethical value also Morality consists in altruism and altruism is spiritual as it transcends egoism Spirit is the reality which reveals itself in the realm of life which is above ego and selfishness Morality is integral to religion. Religion has often been identified with morality and has been defined as 'morality suffused with emotion' Morality consists in virtues as the quality of character and expresses in virtuous i.e altruistic conduct. Spiritual reality is essentially good[62] and the value of morality or religion is substantially spiritual, though it manifests in various specific modes Even the social values derive their value from spiritual non-duality, without which social relations become fraught with conflict instead of being amicable. The secular values of food and sex also become human only by their integration with spiritual non-duality which raises them above the animal level at which they are strongly selfish and are involved in conflict due to selfishness. The aesthetic value of beauty is also spiritual in its inspiration and social context.

Thus spiritual value is the core of all other values. The Upanishad contain the most fundamental substance of axiology in so far as they deal mainly with spiritual reality of life. There is hardly any work of western philosophy which deals so exclusively and deeply with this fundamental spiritual reaa-

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62 शान्तं शिवम् । माण्डूक्य० ७

lity. The Indian works which deal mainly with spirit are inspired by and based upon Upanishads which are the earliest treatises of spiritual philosophy in India as well as the west.

And the Upanishads are also spiritual in their method They are not intellectual in their method of treatment like the later works of the Vedanta They are direct, suggestive and slightly instructive They do not propound the spiritual reality, they rather indicate it and direct the seekers to discover the spirit for themselves in their own integral experience

Thus the Upanishads are spiritual both in their form and content They are original spiritual treatises in the realm of human contemplation and contain a comprehensive account of spirit so far as it is possible to render in words a reality which is beyond thought and speech but which is the fundamental truth of life and all other values of life In this respect the Upanishads as philosophical treatises and also in their theme are most unique in the entire realm of philosophical and religious enterprize of human mind

**7 Transvaluation of Values**

It is evident from the foregoing account of Upanishadic axiology that the Upanishadic view of life is not so dominantly transcendental and world—denying as it is generally taken to be, and that secular, social and ethical values have been given considtrable attention by the sages of the Upanishads The axiological survey of Upanishads undertaken in the next chapter will elucidate in detail which of the Upanishads give importance to these values and to what extent Those, who are under the impression that the Upanishads propound an entirely transcendental philosophy and maintain a world-denying view of life, will be surprised to find that the spiritualism of the Upanishads is not so abstractly transcendental as it is generally believed to be and that the secular values of food, sex, health etc. are given as much importance in the Upanishads as it is rea-

sonably required in a wholesome view of life. The Taittiriya treatise on food and the Brihadaranyaka treatise on sex are surprising in their realism and relevance to worldly life. The asceticism of the Upanishads is not abstract and absolute, like that of Jainism and Buddhism It is reasonably co-ordinated with a due recognition of secular and social values.

The cardinal question in connection with the axiology of the Upanishads is the ultimate importance of these values and their correlation with the supreme spiritual value which is undoubtedly the dominant strain of the Upanishadic thought In view of the factual evidence of statements of texts, the transcendentalist interpretors of the Upanishads may concede, like Shankaracharya, a provisional importance of secular, social and ethical values, but they may not accept final importance of them and they may deny any real relation of these values with supreme spiritual reality on technical grounds. It was on these technical grounds that Shankaracharya conceived of a dual standard of reality and relegated these values to the realm of phenomena which may seem to be real and can be allowed to be treated so till the realization true knowledge does not dawn upon a man, with which they disappear like an illusion or like darkness before light The secular world of all mundane values disappears like the morning mist when sun of self-realization rises on the horizon of life Then Brahman alone remains as the ultimate reality and the world which was taken as a provisional reality is dispelled like an illusion and disappears like a dream The real is that which endures and is not sublated by anything else The world is a temporary illusion and is sublated by reality on its realization. This is presented as the view of Shankaracharya and many scholars have, on the basis of this view, treated secular, social and ethical values as a provisional illusion having no ultimate reality, as it is dispelled by realization of reality.

It is evident that on this view no ultimate and real value

can be assigned to worldly objects, social relations and moral virtues. The view of Shankaracharya is taken to be near the intention of the Upanishads It is to be examined closely and deeply whether the Upanishads bear witness to such a world-denying view and also whether Shankaracharya himself was such an absolute transcendentalist.

Shankaracharya carried to their logical conclusion the implications of some of the crucial anomalies of the Vedanta, which originated in the Upanishads. Hence it will not be sufficient to cite some Upanishadic texts in support of the recognition of the secular, social and ethical values in the Upanishads. It will also be necessary to consider the logical implications of these statements, as to how these led Shankaracharya to his extremist view of the Vedanta.

The account of Upanishadic axiology given above in this chapter and in greater detail in the next chapter shows clearly that the evidence of the text abundantly supports our contention that the Upanishads amply recognise the secular, social and ethical values There seems to be no such doubt in the mind of the Upanishadic sages, as is later aroused by Shankaracharya, about the ultimate importance of these values They do not seem to treat them as provisional or phenomenal as Shankaracharya is reported to regard them. Nor do they seem to have a dual standard of reality in their mind which in the Advaita of Shankaracharya relegates these values to the realm of maya which is variously rendered as phenomena, appearance, illusion or unreality all of which are ultimately equivalent in their meaning This is a very crucial question of the Vedanta in view of Ramanuja's extreme realism according to which not only the world but even illusions and dreams are real.

How can such extremely opposite approaches to the Upanishadic Vedanta be possible ? And how can both of them be correct and credible ? The comparative evaluation of these two opposite interpretations of the Vedanta can be considered on

two cardinal points one of them is subjective and the other is objective The subjective point is more relevant in relation to the view of Ramanuja It is that sublation of one axiological attitude by another is a fact of life. A man who regards wealth, pleasure or pride as important comes to realize other values as higher and more important Situations and experiences are not rare in life when not only wealth or pleasure, but even one's own existence seems to be meaningless and futile Many persons commit suicide in such situations, as life seems to be worse than death due to the futility of existence And these are not temporary moods but enduring sentiments which persist in life and refuse to be sublated easily by other attitudes If a change of axiological attitudes is admissible, equality of the status of all things cannot accepted Ramanuja's equation of dreams and illusions along with the objective world with spiritual reality, in regard to the ontological status, becomes highly disputable. Axiological degrees and gradations seem to be necessary Then dualism of standards of evaluation, as proposed by Shankara, seems to be inevitable.

The second objective point is more relevant in the context of the view of Shankara. That pertains to the status of objective existence in the context of these changing axiological attitudes Does the noumenal or transcendental view of reality nihilate physical existence of objects or does it only transform our attitude towards them ? Shankara is taken by his followers to support the former view, but a closer scrutiny of his commentaries will be found to give greater support to the latter view Shankara has used a word—'inseparable' (aprithak)—numerous times in his commentaries to indicate that the objective world is unreal, if it is treated as separate or independent existence. It means that they acquire higher status of reality if, in a higher view, they are seen as related to or integrated with supreme spiritual reality Ramanuja also regards the objective existences as 'inseparable attributes' of God and it will be difficult to distinguish between the view of Shankara and

Ramanuja on this point. But a duality of the standard of evaluation, much like that of Shankara, will be necessary as in common life this inseparability of objective phenomena with spiritual reality is not recognised. Then the main difference between Shankara and Ramanuja will be on the status of the individual self, but so far as the objective existence is concerned its status will be governed by the two fold standard of axiological evaluation, which is implied in the Vedanta of the Upanishads as is exemplified by the first verse of the Isha Upanishad

The crucial question about the import of the Upanishadic Vedanta seems to be axiological and not ontological as it is generally taken to be The whole difficulty and confusion has been created by an ontological view of Maya, which appears in the cosmological context. The crucial problem of the Vedanta can be solved, if Maya is taken as an axiological illusion in life. As the illusion is general, it may be cosmic and may have metaphysical causes, which are beyond the scope of human understanding

It is more sensible to understand Maya as an axiological illusion and regard the phenomenal view of the world as an axiological illusion, so common in life, on account of which we take the objects to be real in themselves and are inclined to indulge in a life of senses without due integration of them with spiritual reality Such a life of indulgence, no doubt, affords fleeting pleasures, which often end in suffering, but not enduring joy which can be attained only by axiological integration of objects with spiritual reality. The Vikshepa of later Advaita, understood as ontological projection of objective existence, can be interpreted as axiological illusion presenting the objects as having value in themselves The Avarana can be more conveniently understood as a subjective reflection of this Vikshepa resulting in an oblivation of supreme spiritual reality from our vision of life and its values This axiological illusion

consists in the naturalistic and egoistic attitude of life which causes alienation from other persons. Spiritualistic attitude inspires affiliation with others and a consequent transformation of the naturalistic and egoistic view. Domestic happiness and social welfare depend on this spiritual attitude. If duality and non-duality are understood as alienation and affiliation with other persons having axiological implications, instead of being taken as cognitive or ontological principles, the Advaita of Shankara will be found to be closer to the view of the Upanishads, with their evident recognition of secular, social and ethical values. The Maya with its Vikshepa and Avarana will signify the emphatically naturalistic and alienating view of life. This is the phenomenal standpoint which can be sublated by the spiritual or the transcendental view of life, in which the phenomenal life, with all its objective contents, will be elevated and transformed into and integrated with a blissful spiritual existence. Such a view of axiological transformation of worldly values is prominently propounded in the Upanishads and can be coherently discovered in the works of Shankara also.

Another crucial problem arises in the philosophy of Shankara in the context of cosmological creation from the spiritual reality which is immutable and transcendent of time. The Brahman or the ultimate spiritual reality is considered to be the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe both by Shankara and Ramanuja. A real transformation of an immutable reality is inconceivable, as it involves a contradiction; hence a theory of illusory causation called Vivartavada was developed in later Advaita. As Maya in its ontological context came to signify unreality of the world so also Vivarta came to suggest its illusory or unreal projection. But Shankara does not regard the problem of creation as significant in itself He regards it as a secondary principle, the primary significance of which consists in affirming the supremacy and ultimacy of the spiritual reality through the causal identity of the world

with it[63] The emphasis of Shankara is more on suggesting the nature of ultimate spiritual reality than on explaining the creation of the world from it[64] He has clearly denied the ultimate philosophical importance of cosmology and interpreted it as having its significance in indicating the nature of spiritual reality[65] The fact is that causation is a principle of mutation and determination and also of adequacy of cause with effect. It cannot be applicable to spiritual reality which is immutable and is not determinate in nature It is also not exhausted in causal adequacy and abounds in excess (of joy) which is its cardinal character or essence If Vivarta is interpreted in the reverse context of spiritual enlightenment, the determinacy of all temporal means will be found to be inapplicable to spiritual enlightenment treated as an effect. These means will be found to be inadequate in principle to the end of enlightenment and inadequate also to explain the excess of joy that is experienced in spiritual enlightenment

Creation or causation is a course in time, while spiritual reality is not temporal in character. It is eternal, ever-existent and immutable in course of time. Temporal also comes about to be temporary i e perishable Spiritual reality or bliss is enduring and imperishable Thus the relation of time and activity to reality also creates a crucial problem in the Vedanta. The problem is apparently insoluble in view of the opposite characters of time and reality A logical solution of this problem does not seem to be possible, as logically time and reality are opposed to each other. The consonance of time with reality can be realized in experience. A ground for such a consonance can be found in the admission of the dynamic nature of reality in the Upanishads alongwith its transcendent character. The Isha Upanishad clearly confirms the dynamic character of reality

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63 एत० भाष्य २-१-१ वृह० भाष्य २-१-२० ।

64 ब्रह्म सूत्र भाष्य २-१-२६ ।

65 ब्रह्म सूत्र भाष्य ४-३-१४ ।

along with its transcendence of movement and time[66] A glimpse of non-dualistic spiritual experience in actual life can create a conviction of harmony of dynamics and transcendent eternity in spiritual reality Its effects can be empirically observed in slower aging, longer youth and lesser weariness by activity.

Thus an axiological approach to the principles of the Advaita Vedanta of both Upanishads and Shankara will resolve many anomalous problems that arose in the later Advaita, and will present to us a more realistic and more positive view of the Vedanta of the Upanishads In such a view the secular, social and ethical values will be found to possess not only a provisional value as the dualistic standard of Advaita Vedanta allows, but an ultimate importance, of course in integration with the ultimate spiritual reality. The secular values of food, sex and other objects of life are denied either recognition, nor ultimate importance in the Upanishads These are given ample recognition in the Upanishads and are nowhere condemned as provisional or illusory as is the impression given by followers and critics of Advaita Vedanta, and also by some interpretors of the Upanishads The ethical values, though they cannot be causally related to spiritual reality and its realization in life and must therefore involve a leap to enlightenment, also have their due importance as a necessary course of spiritual discipline leading, it may be by a leap, to spiritual realization. The logical and metaphysical transcendence of ethical categories of good and evil in spiritual reality and realization, does not imply a negation of them It is a misrepresentation of truth to treat realization as an abandonment of moral discretion and of good alongwith evil and to elucidate it by the analogy of the boat in crossing a river The evil is, of course, overcome in spiritual realization and obstructs it before realization, but the good is integral to reality, is conducive to its realization

66 तदेजति ईश० ५ ।

and is retained, not as a deliberated will but as a spontaneous expression of the spiritual being of the realized persons The kinship of good with spiritual reality and antagonism of evil with it and transcendency of evil in realization can be verified in some measure even in our common experience and more convincingly in the course of spiritual progress

All that the transcendental axiology of the Upanishads implies is a transvaluation of all other values in the light of spiritual reality and an integration of all other values with it. That is not tentamount to the denial of these values or even to nullification of them in the final state of realization It is infact an elevation, enhancement and enrichment of these values by bestowing a new dimension to their commonly recognised character. This transvaluation of other values is the cardinal principle of the Upanishads and is contained in the very first phrase of the first verse of the Isha Upanishad which can be treated as the foremost among the older and authentic Upanishads This Upanishad enjoins upon every man to integrate objects and objectively covetted values of the mobile world with the transcendent reality which metaphysically sustains and governs it Bliss is the main character or content of spiritual reality. Thus the above injunction will signify the integration of objective values of the mobile world with the enduring spiritual bliss which is non-dualistic as contrasted to objects and fleeting pleasures derived from them, which are dualistic because they are individualistic The second line of the verse referred to above instructs man to enjoy life with moderation and with non-dualistically shared joy, both of which follow from the first injunction

The second verse of the Isha Upanishad enjoins upon every man to devote to action all his life without egoistic attachment to it and its fruit It is much like the Karma Yoga of the Bhagwadgita There is no indication in the Upanishad itself that such activity belongs to a lower life of ignorance and is desired for

the ignorant only, as Shankaracharya has tried to make out in his commentary on the second verse. The Upanishad considers activity as an integral truth of life supported and sustained by the dynamic nature of reality.[67] and regards it as the genuine content of life like enjoyment of objects in the first verse and virtuous conduct in the subsequent verses It only exhorts us to integrate them with spiritual reality and with its realization in non-dualistic i e. non-individualistic joy of commonly shared experience This integration is the Upanishadic principle of transvaluation of other values of life which implies axiological transformation of them by investing them with a spiritual and blissful dimension. Several statements of other Upanishads substantiate the supreme axiological status of spiritual reality and the transvaluation of other values for a life of divine blissfulness in which negative values or limitations of life like fear, sorrow, suffering, decay, death etc are overcome and transcended and man attains the highest axiological status and a most enduring and satisfying existence in life

Most notable among these statements is the verdict of Yajnavalkya, the greatest among the sages of the Upanishads, that things and relations of the world are not pleasurable or valuable in themselves but they are valuable for the sake of spiritual reality i e. they acquire value in and by their integration with spiritual reality which is non-ddualistic and blissful[68] The valuelessness of objects and relations is realized by people in acute alienation with their intimates Maitreyi, the learned wife of Yajnavalkya indicates this valuelessness of wealth etc. when Yajnavalkya is taking sannyasa, though she does not express it with reference to alienation[69] The spiritual reality, which is often taken as metaphysical, can also be treated as axiological and sustaining life as supreme value of existence.

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67 तदेशति ईश० ५ ।
68 आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति बृह० २-४-५ ।
69 बृह० २-४-३ ।

This aspect of spiritual reality is clearly emphasised in several statements of the Upanishads of which the following statements are notable. The Taittiriya Upanishad says that 'beings are born of Brahman and they live by it after being born[70] The Katha Upanishad says more clearly that 'man does not live by vital power etc but by something else which is besides these and in which all these have their foundation; that something which is the sustenance of life is the eternal and esoteric Brahman.[71] The essence of life is joy and it is the source and sustenance of life according to Taittiriya Upanishad.[72] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad confirms that 'men live by a fraction of this spiritual joy[73] without which no human existence can be possible

This axiological immanence of supreme spiritual reality, alongwith its blissful character, has been ignored in the tradition of the Vedanta that followed after the Upanishads This neglect of bliss as supreme reality and supreme value has led later Vedanta to the delusions of cosmological and dialectical intricacies in which it deeply involved itself after Shankaracharya There is no awareness of these intricacies in the Upanishads They are mainly devoted to the affirmation of the supreme reality of spirit and to the exploration of the practical discipline through which it could be realized. They regard the supreme spirit as the metaphysical foundation of existence and life. Cosmologically they consider it to be the cause of the universe. They also regard it as the ultimate basis of life Ethically and axiologically it is the supreme value and ultimate goal of life

Occasional ascetic strains are to be found in the Upanishads, as they are not in the least hedonic in their view of life. They

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70 तैत्तिरीय० ३-१ ।

71 कठ २-२-५,६ ।

72 तैत्तिरीय० ३-६ ।

73 बृहदारण्यक० ४-३-३२ ।

do not regard either wealth or pleasure as the end of life. But they do not seem to deny the due importance of secular values like food, sex etc and social and ethical values. Ample evidence is available in the texts of the Upanishads to prove their due recognition of these values There is no indication in the Upanishads that the recognition of these values is only provisional, as is implied in the dual standard of evaluation invented by Shankaracharya. Nowhere do the Upanishads assert, as Shankaracharya is alleged to do, that the world with its mundane values disappears after spiritual realization

This recognition of worldly values by the Upanishads cannot be treated as a naive empiricism the coherence of which with ultimate spiritualism is not clearly understood by the Upanishadic sages Several statements of the Upanishads clearly confirm the Upanishadic view of transvaluation of values. What the Upanishads intend is neither a naive indulgence in worldly values nor an ascetic denial of them, but a transformation of them by their integration with spiritual reality. This transformation is not a 'transmutation of appearances' as is intended by Bradley in his corrective Absolutism It does not seek to distort the empirical character of worldly values by subjecting them to a logical or rational consistency. The Upanishadic transformation of values is, on the other hand, a confirmation of their empirical character It does not seek to devalue their status or nature, on the other hand, it intends to enrich and enhance their intrinsic empirical value and in addition to it, or thereby to add a new dimension of blissful spirituality to them The worldly values are only quantitatively compromised and socially restricted, in this transvaluation but are immensely enhanced in satisfaction and joy which are the cardinal axiological standards for all values Secular values become more joyful in this transvaluation. The social values find a more secure and more sanctified foundation in it Instead of being external and utilitarian contracts of life, they become intimate and intrinsic relations of spirit in which it finds its enlargement and greater fulfil-

ment. The ethical good acquires a kinship with supreme spirit, inspite of the logical difficulties of being causally related to an eternal reality, and attains, in self-realization, a spontaneity in which moral freedom culminates in a spiritual excellence. This spiritual excellence endows human existence with a divine dimension by virtue of which it approximates in glory with supreme God-hood



## CHAPTER III

# AXIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF UPANISHADS

### 1. Introduction

The philosophy of the Upanishads or the Vedanta as it is designated both in the sense of representing the culmination of Vedic thought and also in the sense of containing Supreme knowledge, has mostly been presented as a metaphysics of ultimate reality. That ultimate reality is understood as absolute existence with an ontological emphasis It is true that this absolute existence is not objective, external or material because such existence is obviously relative (due to its being related to a knowing subject) and is visualized as absolute consciousness and also as absolute bliss But the ultimate reality as Bliss or as blissful being or as blissful experience has not been treated in the tradition of the Vedanta philosophy with the emphasis it deserves It is only in some of the Upanishads that the cardinal truth of bliss has been mentioned with emphasis and bliss has been treated as the essence of reality or Brahman as it termed. But the Upanishads also have often strongly inclined towards the ontological character of reality. The fact of the cosmic existence and the intellectual demand for explaining its origination has led (in fact misled) even the Upanishads to cosmological thinking. The metaphysical reality is viewed as the ultimate cause of the universe. But as empirical causation cannot be applid to transcendent reality without involving logical contradiction a novel view of causation tended to develop in the Vedantic tradition which tried to reconcile creation of the world with the transcendent character of ultimate reality without compromising its real nature. This effort for saving the transcendent character of reality resulted in affording only a secondary reality to the world which was later reduced to illusory existence. The illusoryness or unreality of the world deprived

human life also of all meaning and value and also denied its relation with reality except in the sense of absorption of individual being into universal reality of Brahman, which is taken as abolition of the very existence of man. The transcendent metaphysical reality of Brahman shines in its own and absolute glory and leaves no meaning and value to life as commonly understood

There are indications in the Upanishads which support a real relation of reality with life Some utterences of the Upanishads maintain that transcendent reality is also the support and sustenance of life But these indications and utterances have been ignored and have not been utilized for developing a humanistic and positivistic (not in the technical sense of modern positivism but in the sense of affirmation of the world and life, instead of negation of them) view of the Vedanta Thus the Vedánta developed in the metaphysical, ontological and cosmaological direction It is a strange anomaly of the Vedanta-philosophy that the transcendent metaphysical reality of Brahman has been treated as an object of intellectual inquiry, the absolute has been sought as a cognitive object A greater anomaly is that cosmology, with an emphasis on Brahman as the cause of creation, has occupied a place of importance in the treatises of the Vedanta, while in fact, creation and the world do not have any real relation with reality, nor do they have any real existence The Upanishads also deal with creation on some occasions But the Brahmasutras, which later formed the pivot of the Vedanta, start with observations of Brahman as the cause of creation Later Vedanta which developed on the basis of the Brahmasutras is emphatically cosmological This cosmology is also confined to the origination of the universe. The other aspect of cosmology which understands Brahman also as the basis, support and sustenance of life has been completely ignored This neglect led to the later elaboration of the Vedanta largely as a metaphysical ontology and as a confusing cosmology. In both these aspects the Vedanta became unrelated

to life The absolute existence of Brahman left no link with the existence of man and cosmology afforded no reality to the world With this sundering of man and the world from reality, the emphasis on the Brahman as the end of human life could not become earnestly inspiring. Damned in unreality, man could not venture with hope to realise reality which had an absolute existence away from his worldly being

The intention of this present study is to restore the broken thread of original Vedanta of the Upanishads and to bring in limelight those aspects of the Upanishadic Vedanta in which the ultimate reality of the Brahman has been maintained as the support and the sustenance of life, and the realisation of Brahman as such is viewed as an axiological transformation of cosmic existence and human life Such an approach to the Vedanta can be termed as axiological. Axiology is the philosophy of value. It is an intermediate philosophy between metaphysical ontology and unconvincing cosmology. The former asserts a transcendent reality unrelated to life and the latter explains a course of creation which is unrelated to reality Both deprive man's life and his world of meaning and value. Axiology is a humanistic philosophy in the sense that it views both reality and the world in relation to man Value also can be treated metaphysically. It may be undefinable but it is not unrealizable. It is a fact and an ideal of human life. If it is reality, it is reality related to man and his life This axiological approach to the Vedanta is expected to restore the link of reality with human existence and with the world, which is the original intention of the Upanishads Neither the value of life, nor the world is sought to be denied as it has been done in the later Vedanta that was based on the Brahmasutras On the other hand these are given due recognition in the Upanishads. An axiological transformation of these is the first injunction of the Isha Upanishad which is treated in the Vedantic tradition as the first among the Upanishads.

The purpose of the present study is to bring to limelight the secular, social and ethical values recognised in the Upanishads and to indicate the spiritual principle which is urged in the Upanishads as the principle of axiological transformation of these values An axiological survey of the Upanishads is made as the preliminary of this enterprise Such a survey of Upanishad will reveal to readers the extent to which recognition of values is contained in statements scattered in the Upanishads. After such a survey a systematic reconstruction of these statements will present a consolidated axiological view of the Upanishads, which will constitute the main body of our study.

**2. Values in the Upanishads**

Value can be treated as a metaphysical term in the sense that it is ultimate reality But value is not metaphysical in the sense of being absolutely transcendent Nor is it absolutely ontological in the sense of being 'mere reality' unrelated to life Value in general or some particular value may be transcendent Some of the values may be metaphysical in the sense of being beyond physical modes of existence and life But value is also the reality of life. It is a humanistic reality, a reality which is realized and is to be realized in human life. This axiological reality has been distinguished in its many modes ranging from the biological values of food and sex to the aesthetic and spiritual value of beauty and God

The Upanishads have been mostly represented as a metaphysics of ultimate reality which is called Brahman. The Brahman has been conceived as an ontological reality unrelated to human life The cosmology of Vedanta also reduces the world to an illusory existence and deprives life of all serious meaning Thus life is sundered from reality that is Brahman But there are indications in the Upanishads which affirm the reality of the world and life Many statements of the Upanishads afford due importance to secular values like food, body, senses, mind, health, sex etc. Social values also are duly recognised in

them in the form of relations of man with man, of the child with mother and father, of pupils with the perceptor etc. Moral or ethical values are appreciated in the Upanishads with a spiritual emphasis It is the intention of present study to discover the place of these values in the Upanishads which have not been given due importance in the latter Vedantic thought or which are rather believed to have been denied in the ascetic philosophy of the Upanishads The world and life are both believed to be unreal, with their material, secular, social and ethical values. It will be our endeavour to explore on the basis of the texts of the Upanishads as to what extent and in what sense these values find a place in the Upanishads

Before venturing upon a detailed account of values in the Upanishads it is necessary to emphasise the actual axiological attitude of the Upanishads. This attitude of the Upanishads can be defined as spirituo-empirical attitude. It can be explained as a concrete spiritual attitude which considers spiritual reality or Brahman as the Supreme reality, but which also duly recognises the material, secular, social and ethical values with the qualification that the Brahman is the Supreme value or the value of values and all other values derive their value from it Without it or when alienated from it by ignorance or wrong attitude to life, these other values lose all their value and become valueless. It is in this axiological sense that these values are unreal i e. they are valueless or worthless, as good as they would be if were not at all Their existence is futile and it can be confirmed by experience that it is worse than non-existence. Ontologically these are, but axiologically these are valueless This is the mystery of existence and life. This is an axiological meaning of maya which has been ignored in the metaphysical and cosmological treatment of Vedantic spiritualism The spiritual reality of Brahman is undoubtedly transcendent but it is also immanent in the world and life The transcendence of the Brahman has been greatly emphasised in the Vedantic tradition. But the importance of im-

manence of Brahman in the world and life has not been duly emphasised and explained This immanence is a metaphysical fact, but it is to be realised in the conduct and experience of life. Such realisation will bestow spiritual reality and divine excellence upon earthly things, activities and relations This spirituo-empirical attitude of the Upanishads is evident in the very first word of the Ishopanishad which is treated as the first among the Upanishads in the Vedantic tradition.

This spirituo-empirical view of the Vedanta is to be distinguished both from the one-sided emphasis on the transcendental metaphysics in the Vedantic tradition and also from the one-sided empiricism or materialism of some systems of philosophy The transcendental metaphysics is a venture of human mind beyond its powers, a venture to comprehend what it is not capable of comprehending. One-sided emphasis on materialism is a refusal to recognise a reality which it is possible for human mind to recognise, and a refusal to venture even to the extent to which human mind is capable to venture We propose to present an axiological view of the Upanishadic Vedanta with the understanding that in the spirituo-empirical axiology of this view is contained the real intention of the sages of the Upanishads who visualized the supreme reality of Brahman and who also envisaged the meaning of world and the value of life in the realisation of immanence of Brahman in the objects of the world and the conduct of life

It is evident that such a view will be nearer to the cosmic approach to the Vedanta by Ramanuja than to the acosmic interpretation of it by Shankara. But here we must make it clear that we consider the metaphysics and cosmology of Ramanuja also as futile as that of Shankara and his followers. Our intention is to explain, on the basis of the Upanishads, the spiritualism of Vedanta in the context of world and life The spiritual axiology of the Upanishads is sought to be co-related with the empirical fact of objective world and secular, social and ethical values of life Such a view can be defined as a

spirituo-empirical realism according to which the spiritualized value of empirical things, activities and relations can be experienced in life and can be confirmed in common experience and relations of life

### 3. Values in the Ishavasyopanishad

The Ishawasyopanishad is recognised as the first among the Upanishads in the popular Vedantic tradition which is contained in the well known verse enumerating the ten older and more important Upanishads commented upon by Sankara But apart from the popular tradition the Ishavasyopanishad is in its own merit, of supreme importance among the original Vedantic texts Historically it is the only Upanishad which forms an organic part of a Vedic Samhita and is embodied in it as its last chapter. It is the only mantropanishad, if mantra is taken in the sense of Veda and more truly justifies the appelation of Vedanta given to the Upanishads It constitutes the fourteeth chapter of the Samaveda Samhita, while other Upanishads form parts either of the Brahmanas or the Aranyakas But besides this unique historical inheritance the Ishavashyopanishad contains, in its small size, the essence of the Vedantic thought within eighteen small verses Its author has condensed as much spiritual thought in these eighteen verses as is contained in the detailed elaboration of the Bhagwadgita in eighteen chapters. Its two opening verses, which were greatly appreciated by the modern English poet Auden, are like a complete bi-polar motto or massage of spirituo-empirical life The very first verse or even its opening phrase possesses the eternal light of the pole-star for life The second verse expresses more directly the dynamic attitude towards life which follows as a practical counterpart of the spiritual attitude of life indicated in the first verse.

The opening phrase of the first verse of the Ishavasyopanishad comprehends in its injunctive statement both the God

and the world.[1] It is explained by commentators as stating the metaphysical truth that the world of nature and objects is founded upon and sustained by God or the supreme spirit which is later called Brahman in other Upanishads. But the injunctive gramatical form of the statement evidently suggests that this metaphysical truth is intended to be realised by man in the practical attitude and conduct of life. Such realization embodies the essence and salvation of life. All other details of spiritual life can be convincingly derived from this opening first phrase of the Ishavasyopanishad Even the text of the Ishavasyopanishad which follows is only a paraphrase of this opening phrase

It is not accidental but it represents the real view of the Vedanta that this opening phrase of the Ishavasyopanishad comprehends in its composition both God and the world with primacy of God and with an injunction for adopting a spiritual attitude towards the world and worldly life It is true that such recognition of the world is not tentamount to gross or absolute materialism as is adopted by some thinkers of India and the West But there is no indication in the Ishavasyopanishad of the falsity or the illusory character of the world which became the cardinal principle of later Advaita and which deprived the world of all reality and life, of all value and meaning. It is a plain and simple injunction for man to spiritualize has view of life in regard to objects, appetites, actions and relations The meaning of this spiritualization of the view of life has not been explained in all its aspects and the details in any of the commentaries If it is done, a whole and concrete spiritual view of life will become evident. In such a view all values of life will find their due place That is the evident intention of the Ishvasyopanishad The value of the material world and of secular appetites is recognised in the first verse

1 ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् । ईश० १

of the Ishopanishad and the value of action is emphasised in the second verse of it Other following verses highlight the importance of ethical values. Social values are implied in ethical values and more expressly recognised in other Upanishads

The word 'idam' (this) of the opening phrase of Ishopanishad signifies the material world of objects. Sarvam contains an exhaustive recognition of material world The dynamic, temporal or changing character of the objective world is indicated by a repetitive emphasis on movement by using the word jagatyam (in the world which moves) for the world and in addition to it by verbally describing it as moving (jagat) This may well be taken to suggest even the ephemeral character of objects of the world That is a fact which no materialistic or a realistic philosophy can deny The Ishopanishad recognises candidly both the fact of the objective world and also its dynamic or ephemeral character But it also injuncts us to spiritualize it in our view of life It is notable that the Ishopanishad neither treats the world as illusory nor does it condemn the physical enjoyments of life. It is not ascetic, thought it does not prescribe indulgence in pleasures like the charvaka But it emphasises restraint and regulation of physical enjoyment This restraint and regulation is implicit in the opening phrase, it is only made explicit in the second line of the verse[2] Indulgence is self-contradictory and self-defeating Therefore an attitude of restraint is the most wholesome view of life.

Karma or action is also a fundamental value of life. Action is a course in time. Life also is a course in time There is a deep kinship of character between action and life Hence people live by activity most of which is not necessary, important, relevant or fruitful Much of human activity is futile and un-

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2 तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः। ईश० १

necessary. People involve in it only because they cannot tolerate inactive state Speaking also is an activity. Action has not been recognised as a specific value in Western Axiology It may be included in ethical value Moral conduct is based on will But many modes of action are not so considerably ethical. They are a-moral Hence it is quite proper to recognise action as a specific value which is secular, social and also ethical

The Bhagvadgita contains a profound philosophy of action. The Ishopanishad is notable among Upanishads for its emphasis on action The second verse of the Upanishad enjoins upon man to devote to action and live a dynamic life for a hundred years[3] Sankara considers that this injunction applies to the ignorant and not to the enlightened[4] But there is no such limitation intended in the text of the Upanishad There is a view according to which action can be reconciled with spiritual attitude of life This view is called Karmayoga in the Bhagwadgita The second verse of the Ishopanishad also embodies such a reconciliation which alone can be a wholesome attitude of life The best way is to spiritualize action That is what the Ishopanishad and the Bhagwadgita propose to do Read in the light of the first verse the dynamic theory of the second verse of the Isopanishad proposes a spiritualization of action like the spiritualization of objects and their enjoyment prescribed in the first verse The two verses of the Ishopanishad contain a recognition of the value of objective world and active life, alongwith an injunction to spiritualize them They express a complete and wholesome view of life

Social and ethical values are recognised in the succeeding verses of the Ishopanishad Love, goodwill, calm, peace, steadiness etc are understood as important ethical values. These

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3 कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शतं समाः । ईश० २

4 शांकर भाष्य ईश० २

are not positively and directly mentioned But these are positive implications of the negative ethical evils of hatred, infatuation and sorrow which are clearly mentioned in the sixth and seventh verses of the Ishopanishad[5] The root of evil is unspirituality or denial of spiritual union with people in life, which damns a man to sorrow in this life and to suffering in regions of darkness in after life[6] All goodness results from spiritual union with persons which fulfils the injunctions of the first and the second verses. All evil follows from unspirituality. Hatred, infatuation and sorrow are cardinal among them. All evils are corrolaries of hatred which alienates man from man. Infatuation is an illusion of greed and lust, which results in violation of the injunction of the second line of the first verse. This infatuation ends in sorrow after disillusionment which is inevitable

Ethical values are fulfilled in social relations. These relations are of two kinds—particular and general. Particular relations are congenital and individual But they are also general relations between man and man. The particular relations are not specifically mentioned in the Ishopanishad. But they are implicitly included in general relations of man with man which are closely recognised in the context of ethical values in verse six and seven Particular social relations are definitely mentioned in some other Upanishads

Thus we see that the secular values are not only recognised but appreciated in their entirety in the very first phrase

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5 यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मान ततो न विजुगुप्सते । ईश० ६
यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः । ईश० ७

6 असुर्या नाम ते लोकाः अन्धेन तमसावृताः ।
ताँस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनोः जनाः । ईश० ३

of the Ishopanishad but with the qualification that they are to be spiritualized and enjoyed with restraint and regulation so that they may not lead to the evils of hatred, infatuation and sorrow and to regions of darkness in after life The implied ethical values of love, temperance etc qualify conduct with spirituality and lead to peace and happiness in social and personal life

## 4. Values in the Kena Upanishads

The Kena Upanishad also starts, like the Ishopanishad, with a spirituo-empirical strain. It is not assertive like the Ishopanishad but it is interrogative in its tone[7] The interrogation is soon supported by an emphatic assertion of the ultimate spiritual basis of the whole being of man—of senses, life, mind, etc[8] As the Ishopanishad recognises all material objects at its very outset, so the Kena Upanishad affirms the physical components of life—mind, vitality and senses—in the very beginning As the Ishopanishad does not recognise the material objects as ultimate and independent, but requires them to be spiritualized, so the Kena Upanishad also does not regard the senses, mind etc as ultimate and independent It seeks the source of their deeper support and inspiration and finds it in the Supreme spirit called Brahman Thus both in the Ishopanishad and in the Kena Upanishad the Supreme Spirit or Brahman is regarded as the Supreme value or the value of values Both the secular values of objects, body, senses, mind etc are not disregarded or condemned as being illusory as is done in the later Avaita On the other hand they are duly and clearly recog-

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7 केनेषितं पतति प्रेपित मन. केन प्राणः प्रथम. प्रैति युक्त' ।
केनेषितं वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षु: श्रोत्र क उ देवो युनक्ति ।। केन० १-१

8 श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्र मनसो मनो यद्वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य प्राण. ।
चक्षुपश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीरा. प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ।।
केन० १-२

nised As they are not treated as ultimate and independent, they are sought to be spiritualized. Spiritualization is a spiritual transvaluation of them which enhances their value and joy in comparison to a materialistic view of life. This spiritualization is a fulfilment of man's earthly life and salvation of his mundane existence It gives enduring happiness in this life and ensures bliss in after life

The Kena Upanishad opens with a question. By whose inspiration are the mind, vitals, speech, eyes, ears etc. directed towards their objects ? The second verse follows with an answer that the Supreme Spirit of the Brahman is the ultimate source of inspiration and direction for them all Those who know it become immortal and get release from the sorrows and sufferings of life

After this initial assertion of the physical values of body. mind and senses, the Kena Upanishad proceeds with the problem of knowing and realizing the Supreme Spirit or the Brahman The social value of the teacher-disciple relation is recognised in this context The ethical values of penance, restraint and moral conduct are recognised at the end as means of spiritual realization The Ishopanishad regards the Supreme Spirit as being untouched with evil.[9] The Kena Upanishad ends with an emphatic assertion that one who realises the supreme spirit is absolved of all evil and abides eternally in the kingdom of spiritual beatitude[10]

The initial recognition of the physical values of body, senses and mind in the Kena Upanishad is notable in contrast to the condemnation of body and senses which became fashiona-

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9 अपापविद्धम् । ईश० ८

10 यो वा एतामेव वेद, अपहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये प्रतितिष्ठति । केन० ४-९

ble in later Advaita This initial recognition of physical values is supported by the introduction (shantipatha) of the Kena Upanishad,[11] which though borrowed from Vedic text, extols the fortitude of body and all its parts and senses, and prays for it The ultimate source of this fortitude is the Supreme Spirit, a close communion with which is sought in the shantipatha This appreciation of physical values marks just the antipole of the later Advaitic tendency to condemn and devalue body and senses as corrupt and sinful and as belonging to the illusory and unreal world

Thus we see that in the first two small but important Upanishads, the worldly objects, worldy enjoyments, body, senses and mind are duly appreciated along with social relations and ethical virtues There is no indication of the unreality and illusoriess of the world and life in these Upanishads The spiritual reality may be transcendent, but it is immanent also. The spiritualization of objects, actions, relations and enjoyments signifies the axiological attitude of these Upanishads. They enjoin upon man an axiological enhancement of these secular, social and ethical values through spiritualization of them There is no indication of unreality of these values in these Upanishads and of the incoherence of action with spiritual reality, which became fashionable in later Advaita It is to be noted in the context of action that the dynamic character of spiritual reality is evidently recognised in the fifth verse of Ishopanishad and justifies the coherence of action with spiritual reality, a fact which was entirely ignored in later Advaita.

### 5. Values in Katha Upanishad

The Katha Upanishad is very famous and important among Upanishads partly due to its enlightening parable of Nachike-

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11 ओ३म् आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक् प्राणश्चक्षुः ।
श्रोत्रमथो बलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि ॥ केन० शान्ति पाठ ।

tas but mainly due to the fact that it contains some fundame
tal tenets of the Vedanta. We find in the Katha Upanisha
for the first time, an evident devaluation of secular valu
of wealth, physical pleasures and even of intellectual val
of reason, such as is not yet seen in the Isha and the Ke
Upanishads These latter Upanishads do certainly regard S
preme Spirit as the supreme reality and treat all other thin
as subordinate to it. The Supreme Spirit is also the supren
power which sustains and inspires all other subordinate age
cies which appear to be active in the world The allegory co
tained in the last two chapters of the Kena Upanishad signifi
the fact that other agencies of power have no power of the
own but are inspired with power by the Supreme Spirit whi
is the supreme power

The Isha and the Kena Upanishads propound a spiritu
empirical view of life in which objects and activities are to
spiritualized. They do it without expressly subordinating a
devaluating them But in the Katha Upanishad, wealth, phy
cal pleasures and reason are almost condemned, if not denie
When Yama offers wealth and pleasures of paradise to Nac
keta in order to dissuade him from his insistent request to
told the secret of death and the ultimate spiritual truth, Nac
ketas declines them and describes them as ephemeral and u
satisfying[12] Pleasures of senses are certainly not abiding a
no hedonism can make them enduring So the worthlessne
of wealth becomes evident to us when we miss something
life which cannot be acquired by wealth. But even while d
clining wealth and pleasures in face of his quest for truth, N
chiketas does not absolutely devaluate or condemn them. W
tingly he remarks that wealth is not difficult to gain I sha
gain it merely by the privilege of having an audience wi
you

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12 श्वोभावा मर्त्यस्य यदन्तकैतत् ।   कठ० १-१-२६
न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यः ।   कठ० १-१-२७

Though the Katha Upanishad is slightly derogatory to material and physical values of wealth, senses etc yet it does not condemn them as unreal or illusory It does not so positively prescribe restrained enjoyment of objects and a regulation of hedonic life by spiritualization of secular values, as does the Isha Upanishad. But it supports the spiritual basis of life more srongly than even the Kena Upanishad. It maintains that man live not by vital forces as it may appear to be the fact, but they live by a transcendent reality which can be called Brahman and which is hidden in our being.[13] Like the Kena Upanishad, the Katha also regards the supreme spirit as the ultimate source of sensory cognition, vital life and physical enjoyment. But the greater emphasis of Katha Upanishad is on inquiry into the deeper nature of Supreme Spirit and not on the correlation of it with other values of life which is the main motive of the Isha Upanishad The theme of the allegory of Nachiketas naturally centres around death and involves the ephemerality of objects and sensory pleasures But while the death is sought to be overcome in the immortality of spiritual realization, the sensory life is not condemned, though it is regarded as transitory and it is so The symbolism of chariot evidently presents an ideal of moral and spiritual life in which senses are to be restrained by intellect and to be regulated by spirit[14] Thus the motive of the Katha Upanishad becomes almost identical with the motive of the Ishopanishad indicated in its first verse.

The social and ethical values are also recognised in the Katha Upanishad Value of social relations is appreciated in Nachiketa's deep regard for his father The first boon that he

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13 न प्राणेन नापानेन मर्त्यो जीवति कश्चन।
इतरेण तु जीवन्ति यस्मिन्नेतावुपाश्रितौ।
हन्त त इदं प्रवक्ष्यामि गुह्यं ब्रह्म सनातनम्। कठ० २-२-५, ६

14 विज्ञान–सारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान् नरः।
सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णो. परमं पदम्॥ कठ० १-३-९

asks of Yama is that the anger of his father may be appeased. The regard that Yama shows to Nachiketas as a guest and that Nachiketas shows towards Yama as a preceptor indicates deep appreciation of social culture and values that need to be observed in the sphere of spiritual discipline. Father and the guests are two persons who are regarded as most respectable after the mother in the Indian tradition.[15] Not only men but also Yama, the god of death, shows great regard for Nachiketas as his guest.

Particular ethical values are not mentioned in the Katha Upanishad, as they are mentioned in the Isha Upanishad. But the moral value in a general manner recognised in it with great importance and emphasis. The pleasant and the good are sharply distinguished in the second section of the first chapter of the Katha Upanishad. The pleasant things are fascinating but binding i.e determining. They are deluding, but the good is the choice of wise men and leads to higher welfare of man.[16] The pursuit of pleasures is prompted by ignorance of supreme spiritual truth[17] which cannot be known by great learning[18] or by reason and argument.[19]

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15 मातृदेवो भव पितृदेवो भव अतिथि देवो भव । तैत्तिरीय० १-११-२

16 अन्यच्छ्रेयः अन्य दुतेव प्रेयः
ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीतः । कठ० १-२-१
श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेत–
स्तौ सम्परीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभि प्रेयसो वृणीते
प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद् वृणीते ॥ कठ० १-२-२

17 अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः । कठ० १-२-५

18 श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः
श्रृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः । कठ० १-२-७

19 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । कठ० १-२-९
न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन । कठ० १-२-२३

The good is known through spiritual wisdom and is pursued by will regulated by spirit according to the metaphor of chariot in Katha Upanishad as intended plainly in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad Practice of good in life is the necessary condition of spiritual realization. One who has not freed himself from evil conduct and has not consequently become calm, cannot hope to realize the supreme spirit[20] Good and evil are opposed to each other They cannot exist together in a man's life Evil eclipses the good Hence it is necessary to be free from it When freed from evil, one will proceed towards good and advance toward realization of Supreme Spirit The emphatic attitude of the Katha Upanishad towards freedom from evil indicates the fundamental affinity of morality with spirituality, which is not so strongly recognised in the later Advaita Good is not cardinally connected with spirituality according to Sankara. He has discounted, on technical grounds any affinity of spirit with moral conduct, and has given only a secondary and subsidiary value to it in comparison to spiritual knowledge which alone according to him is the direct cause of spiritual realization.

But the Katha Upanishad seems to recognise morality as a highly important and necessary value for spiritual discipline The supreme value, however, according to other Upanishads also, is spiritual realization which is an immortal experience in which senses are calmed, the mind and the intellect are at rest[21] and the human spirit enjoys transcendental beautitude in communion with the supreme spirit

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20 नाविरतो दुश्चरितात् नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्त–मानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥ कठ० १-२-२४

21 यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टते तामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥ कठ० २-३-१०

## 6. Values in the Prashna Upanishad

The Prashna Upanishad, as its name indicates, recognised the intellectual value of inquiry into truth. Reason and understanding are given due importance in the very form of the Upanishad. Inquiry into truth also implies a recognition of the social value of teacher-disciple relationship, which is treated with profound regard in the Prashna Upanishad and is evidenced in the regardful attitude of the six inquirers and sage Pippalada towards the truth and consequently towards each other.

The general social value of generation is recognised in the Prashna Upanishad in the context of generation which is to be observed by man on the instance of Prasapati and is to be accompanied with the ethico-spiritual discipline indicated by Tapas, Brahmacharya etc.[22]

Some cardinal secular and ethical values are appreciated in the Prashna Upanishad. The attitude of the Prashna Upanishad towards secular values is a positive, moderate and balanced attitude much like the Isha and the Kena Upanishads There is no evidence of condemnation of secular values of food, sex etc., nor is there any indication of unbalanced asceticsm or of regarding the world and life as unreal and illusory like the later Vedanta.

The fundamental values of food and sex are recognised in the very first chapter of the Prashna Upanishad in the context of generation. Prajapati represents the divine and cosmic principle of generation which sustains the creation. Man is a child of that principle on one hand and on the other hand he represents and operates the principle of generation according to the

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22 तेषामेवैष ब्रह्मलोको येषां तपो
ब्रह्मचर्यं येषु सत्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् । प्रश्न० १-१५

discipline embodied by Prajapati in his being Food is said to be Prajapati as after being digested it transforms into semen which is the seed of generation.[23] Sex as the principle of generation and enjoyment is not condemned On the other hand wholesome and regulated sex enjoyment is extolled as Brahmacharya,[24] which generally is rendered as celebacy and understood as absentenance from sex enjoyment Those who live a regulated sex life and observe penance like Prajapati for generation attain the Kingdom of God, in which they enjoy immortality and eternal spiritual beautitude[25]

The vital power of life designated as Prana is adored in the second and third chapter of the Prashna Upanishad Asked by Bhargava as to who among the gods sustains people and who therefore is superior among them[26] the sage Pippalada replied that though all the elements and senses contribute to the sustenance of people[27] yet vital spirit or Prana is superior to them It sustains them and also life of people[23] Vital spirit or Prana is the axle of life and all other modes of life are centred

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23 अन्नं वै प्रजापति स्ततो ह वै
तद्रेतस्तमादिमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति । प्रश्न० १-१४

24 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव यद्रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यन्ते । प्रश्न० १-१३

25 तद्ये ह वै तत्प्रजापतिव्रत चरन्ति । ते मिथुनमुत्पादयन्ते । तेपामेव
ब्रह्मलोको । प्रश्न० १-१५

26 भगवन्कत्ये व देवाः प्रजा विधारयन्ते । कतर एतत् प्रकाशयन्ते । कः
पुनरेषा वरिष्ठ इति० । प्रश्न० २-१

27 आकाशे ह वा एप देवो वायुरग्निरापः पृथिवी वाङ्मनश्चक्षु श्रोत्रंच ।
ते प्रकाश्याभिवदन्ति । प्रश्न० २-२

28 तान्वरिष्ठः प्राण उवाच । प्रश्न० २-३

in it like spokes in an axle[29] All that is found in the universe is controlled by vital spirit or prana.[30]

Thus the vital spirit is superior to physical elements and senses which compose the bodily existence of man It sustains and supports them But vital spirit is not the ultimate reality. Supreme Spirit or Self is the ultimate reality which gives rise to vital spirit and supports it.[31] The Upanishadic view of life is neither absolute materialism nor abstract spiritualism, but it is bio-spiritualism in the sense that biological life is real but it is not absolute and ultimate It is supported by and is to be synthesised with Supreme Spirit which is the ultimate source, support and goal of life This view is much akin to the positivistic view of Isha and Kena Upanishads

The Prashna Upanishad, like the Katha, assumes that one who understands this spiritual secret of vital existence will attain immortality.[32]

The Prashna Upanishad is notable for its clear recognition of some specific ethical values. Faith, penance and moderation of senses are emphasised in connection with the principle of generation which is symbolized as Prajapati.[33] It is said that Prajapati creates the world by observing penance.[34] It recalls of the Vedic view of creation by penance contained in the Nasadiya Sukta Penance is not in fact an exact rendering of

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29 अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम्। प्रश्न० २-६

30 प्राणस्येदं वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत्प्रतिष्ठितम्। प्रश्न० २-१३

31 आत्मनः एष प्राणो जायते। प्रश्न० ३-३

32 अध्यात्मं चैव प्राणस्य विज्ञायामृतमश्नुते। प्रश्न० ३-१२

33 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया। प्रश्न० १-२

34 प्रजाकामो वै प्रजापतिः स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुन-मुत्पादयते। प्रश्न० १-४

Sanskrit word Tapas Tapas is inward intensification of energy which strengthens thereby and expresses in overt creation. This Tapas is the opposite of indulgence. This Tapas is the root of all ethical virtues They are all based on it The Upanishads duly recognise secular values but they do not instigate indulgence. On the other hand they prescribe moderation for wholesome biological life and emphasise spiritualization of biological tendencies for highest fulfilment of life. Tapas is the discipline which forms the basic principle of this spiritualization of biological life

Sraddha is the spirituo-emotional counterpart of Tapas It is not mere faith but faith exalted by reverence It is a spiritual i e a supra-natural, supra-egoistic, supra-rational attitude of life which can be directed towards all values which deserve it Brahmacharya is generally understood as celebacy, but the Prashna Upanishad regards moderate and regulated sex-enjoyment as veritable Brahmacharya.[35] Etymologically and actually Brahmacharya is adoption of a spiritual attitude in the conduct of life (Brahmacharya i e conduct according to the spirit) Such an attitude does not deny or condemn sex or any other values of life It only demands them to conform to spiritual standards and to rise to spiritual altitudes It is not condemnation of secular values but an elevation and transformation of them, in accordance with the Supreme Spirit. Thus understood, Brahmacharya is identical with the spiruo-empirical view contained in the opening injunction of the Isha Upanishad The observance of Tapas, Brahmacharya and Sraddha leads one to the realization of excellence glory and greatness of life[36]

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35 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव यद्रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यते । प्रश्न० १-१३

36 स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नो महिमानमनुभवति ।
प्रश्न० ५-२

Truth is another moral value recognised in the Prashna Upanishad It is counted with Tapas, Sraddha and Brahmcharya as a part of the creative discipline of Prajapati.[37] It is understood through cognate virtues of straight-forwardness, veracity, simplicity etc[38] which are opposed to and are marked by absence of crookedness, falsity and desceitfulness. Shankara in his commentary explains them as coherence of thought, speech and action Ultimately they will all be correlated with Supreme Spirit and will derive their character from coherence with it. The nature and importance of truthfulness is confirmed by the sage Pippalada in his statement contained in the beginning of the sixth chapter. He committs himself to the inquirers to tell the truth if he knows it and he considers it sinful to conceal the truth from deserving disciples

One who meditates on Om as the symbol of Supreme Spirit is absolved of all sins and evil.[39] This endorses the purity of Supreme Spirit and its accord with moral values which constitute the good One who realizes the Supreme Spirit as the end of discipline attains the eternally calm, unaging, immortal and fearless being which characterizes the Supreme Spirit itself.

All secular, social and ethical values culminate and find their fulfilment in the supreme spiritual reality which is also supreme value and supports them and sustains man's spiritual journey through and with the help of them.

### 7. Values in the Mundaka Upanishad

The Mundaka Upanishad, as its name indicates, is, perhaps, an Upanishad belonging to a sect or school of ascetics who

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37 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया । प्रश्न० १-२

38 नतेषु जिह्ममनृतं न माया चेति । प्रश्न० १-१६

39 यः पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणोमित्येतेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषमिद्धं यायीत स तेजसि सूर्ये सम्पन्नाः । यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा विनिर्मुच्यते एवं ह वै स पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः । प्रश्न० ५-५

kept their heads shaven (mundita). The ascetic influence is evident in it There is no mention of any secular value like food or sex in it, except for an isolated reference to physical power. It is in this Upanishad, after the four others already dealtwith, that individuality is desired to be merged in the universal being of Brahman like a river in the ocean[40] In the context of creation the individual self is regarded as a spark of the universal fire of reality[41] In the four other Upanishads considered so far, the Supreme Spirit is regarded as the supreme reality and ultimate support of the being and value of individuals and objects There is no indication of the unreality or falsity of the existence of objects and men On the other hand, their existence is sought to be axiologically enhanced by spiritual transformation. There is in them no negation or condemnation of these secular and social values Food, sex, and other values are duly appreciated

Secular values are not mentioned in the Mundaka Upanishad They are neither condemned nor appreciated in it. Only a passing reference is made to physical strength as a pre-requisite of spiritual realization It is said that "the spirit cannot be realised by a person lacking in physical strength."[42] This strength has been interpreted by Shankaracharya as power of knowledge or moral strength. There is no indication in the text of the Upanishad to justify such extension of meaning.

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40 यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमाना समुद्रे
अस्तं गच्छन्ति नाम रूपं विहाय । मुण्डक ३-२-८

41 तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद् विस्फुलिगाः
सहस्रश. प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः ।
तथाक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य भावा.
प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति ॥ मुण्डक० २-१-१

42 नायमात्मा वलहीनेन लभ्यः । मुण्डक० ३-२-१४

'Bal' is used here and elsewhere also in other Upanishads in the simple sense of physical strength which is possessed by a by a healthy person and which a sickly person lacks. Physical health and strength is adored in the Vedic tradition and the traces of this tradition continue in the Upanishads also. A weak and sickly person becomes occupied with and worried about the restoration of his physical fitness. He cannot devote to spiritual discipline. Hence physical excellence is the condition of advancing towards spiritual excellence.

The social virtues also cannot be expected to be emphasised in an Upanishad belonging to an ascetic tradition. The ascetic renounces bonds of all social relations He ceases to belong to any genetic lineage and renounces parental and other domestic demoninations He becomes a free citizen of a spiritual domain The only social bond that he recognises is of the teacher-disciple relationship That is in the interest of his spiritual discipline, progress and destiny. Spiritual secrets can not be known and spiritual progress is not possible without the guidance and grace of an enlightended Guru or teacher. The social-spiritual relationship of teacher and disciple is emphasised in several Upanishads It is also emphasised in the Mundaka Upanishad The Upanishad opens in a cordial setting of this relationship like the Katha and Prashna Upanishads. A great teacher Shaunaka approaches the sage Angira with due spiritual etiquette and humility and inquires about the secret and source of knowledge[43] The ritual actions are denounced in this ascetic Upanishad, as is natural for it, and the seeker is enjoined upon to approach modestly with sacrificial fuel in his hand, a learned and enlightened teacher in order to know

43 शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ ।
कस्मिन्नु भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवति ।

मुण्डक० १-१-३

from him about the spiritual reality.[44] One cannot know it without the guidance and grace of an enlightened teacher

The ethical values are however, quite emphatically recognised in the Mundaka Upanishad Chief among them are Tapas, Sraddha, Brahmacharya, and Satya (Truthfulness) which have been highlighted in the Upanishads already dealt with Tapas is more prominent among these as it is in the Prashna Upanishad also It is regarded as a means of advancement towards the realization of Supreme Spirit[45] Sraddha i e reverence for higher values and persons who pursue them, is considered an important virtue along with tapas The advancing enlightenment of those who observe tapas and sraddha with tranquility is described in Mundaka Upanishad[46] Truthfulness and Brahmacharya are also emphasised in Mundaka Upanishad as they are in the Prashna Upanishad These four can be regarded as the cardinal virtues according to these two Upanishads They are recognised in other Upanishads also They are mentioned in various combinations and separately also According to the Mundaka Upanishad these virtues originated from the Supreme Spirit which means that these are spiritual in character[47] The supreme spirit according to it is to be realized by truthfulness, tapas and Brahmacharya The supreme spiritual reality may be above good and evil as understood in the relative sense but the observance of virtues constitutes a discipline which is conducive to its realization The metaphysically transcendent character of reality does not nullify the imma-

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44 तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरूमेवाभिगच्छेत्
समित्पाणि: श्रोत्रिय ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् । मुण्डक० १-२-१२

45 तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म । मुण्डक० १-२-८

46 तप: श्रद्धे । मुण्डक० १-२-११

47 तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा सम्प्रसूता
श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च । मुण्डक० २-१-६

nent value of morality and virtues Truth is regarded as the supreme ethical virtue because it is most comprehensive in its character The magnificent motto adopted by the National Government of independent India that 'Truth alone prevails' is borrowed from the Mundaka Upanishad[48]

Action, which was enjoined upon man in the Isha Upanishad, is discounted in the Katha and Mundaka Upanishads for metaphysical difficulties of a technical type which were keenly recognised by Shankara But Karma, in the Vedantic tradition, is understood mostly in the sense of ritual and selfish actions and the condemnation of Karma in the Upanishads like Katha and Mundaka applies more completely and directly to them Ritual and selfish actions are more antagonistic to spiritual discipline But unselfish and virtuous action is more conducive to it The Mundaka Upanishad regards ritual actions like frail boats unsuited for crossing the stream of spiritual discipline[49] The reason given in the Mundaka Upanishad is the same as that given in the Katha Upanishad Action is temporal and transistory Hence it cannot (technically) be a means to spiritual reality which is eternal[50] The Mundaka Upanishad explains it further that action brings about into being something while the spiritual reality (being eternal) is not something to be brought about into being[51] Hence action is not efficacious in its realization

Moderation is emphasised in the Mundaka Upanishad as an important virtue[52] It is not so markedly recognised in any

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48 सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम् । मुण्डक० २-१-६

49 प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपा । मुण्डक० १-२-९

50 न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते तद्ध्रुवम् । कठ० १-२-१०

51 नास्त्यकृत. कृतेन । मुण्डक० १-२-१२

52 विजानन् विद्वान् भवति नातिवादी । मुण्डक० ३-१-४

other Upanishad It is a remarkable virtue in the context of spiritual realization which is repeatedly regarded to be beyond action, speech intellect, argument, learning etc Intellect and speech are more prone to go to excesses In fact such elaborate argument about what is unarguable by nature, as is found in the Vedantic scholarship which followed the Upanishads, can itself be regarded as an indulgence into intellectual and verbal excess The emphasis on tapas, tranquility etc and the characterization of spiritual reality as 'Silence' (Shanta) directs us towards moral and spiritual discipline and safeguards against excess of any kind

The spiritual realization is characterized in the Mundaka Upanishad as a state in which all mental complexes are resolved and intellectual doubts are subsided[53] and in which one gets beyond sorrow[54] He also gets above virtue and vice, good and evil[55] Ethical disciple and moral virtues lead to transcendent spiritual reality and in the event of realization lead to their own transcendence But this transcendence is only a technical principle of spiritual metaphysics. It does not discount the efficacy of ethical values in spiritual realization Nor does it nullify the expression of spiritual realization in a conduct which is highly moral from social standards The insistence on the technical disparity of morality and action with spiritual reality only signifies that spiritual realization is not the effect produced by action, nor is morality an effect of spiritual realization as categories of cause and effect are not applicable to spiritual reality and its realization

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53 भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वं सशयाः ।

मुण्डक० २-२-८

54 तरतिशोकम् । मुण्डक० ३-२-९

55 तदा विद्वान् पुण्य पापे विधूय । मुण्डक० ३-१-३

### 8. Values in Mandukya Upanishad

The Mandukya Upanishad is, with the Isha Upanishad, the smallest among old and important Upanishads But like the Isha Upanishad it also in full of ideas which are of fundamental value in the Vedanta The emphasis of the Isha Upanishad is more ethical than metaphysical It aims at the spiritualization of objects and of conduct of life The emphasis of the Mandukya Upanishad on the other hand, is more metaphysical It presents a comprehensive view of the reality. As the ethics of Isha Upanishad aims at integrating the world of objects and conduct of life with the highest spiritual reality, so the Mandukya Upanishad also presents an integral metaphysics and aims at integrating all states of man's being with transcendent spiritual reality.

Man's true being is psychic, subjective or internal. External being belongs to objects Man is not an object In so far he is treated by others or by himself as an object his true being is ignored His true being is secure only in so far he continues to act as a subject of experience and action. This subjectivity is minimized in the being of an extremely insaneman, who is reduced to be objective to the maximum degree The Mandukya Upanishad underlines the core of man's existence by emphasising the subjectivity of his being But it is to be noted that the Mandukya Upanishad does not understand subjectivity in the sense of solipsism The solipsic subjectivity of the insane man is different from the integral spiritual subjectivity which constitutes the true being of man according to the Mandukya Upanishad The integral being of man, as understood in the Mandukya Upanishad, is a harmony of various states of man's being with the transcendent spiritual reality.

These states are distinguished in the Mandukya Upanishad as the waking, the dreaming, the sleeping and the transcendent state, the last of which cannot be characterized in any manner and hence it is called the fourth state. These four states are

not infact exclusive of each other but they are like four dimensions of man's being These four dimensions can be distinguished but they are not exclusive of each other They are inter-related and all of them combined constitute the whole being of man. The inter-relation of these four dimensions can be understood as interpenetration or immancnece of each into other states. This is not evident in the text of the Upanishad but it is not violation of its intention and principle. It appears as if the Mandukya Upanishad regards the states of dreaming and sleeping as higher to the state of waking. Some materialistic scholars consider this as a philosophical perversion of dimensions of man's being According to them, waking state is the most important dimension of man's being. They are practically correct But the deeper being of man is more internal and subjective than the waking state of man's ideal (or mental) and inner being which persists even in the waking state and if the importance of deep and dreamless, as viewed in the Mandukya Upanishad, is seriously appreciated, the hierarchy of states of man's being, as envisaged in the Mandukya Upanishad, will be found to not only to be profoundly sensible but extremely remarkable for its unusual access to the deepest recesses of man's being.

The recognition of the waking state, with the implication of the external world of objects, as an integral dimension of man's being, marks the realistic and positive tone of Mandukya Upanishad, which is to be contrasted with the theory of Maya or unreality of objective world developed in later Advaita The fourth or the transcendent dimension of man's being is not a negation of the waking state. There is no indication to this effect in the text of the Upanishad The secular values of life are implicitly included in the waking life of man The fulfilment of secular desires through objects is clearly mentioned in the nineth mantra of the Upanishad

The dreaming state is more subjective than the waking state The objects are not present in this state as external physical things They are present in it as mental or ideal represen-

tations of external objects. Dreaming is usually understood as a temporary phase of man's daily sleep. But understood more deeply, it constitutes the core of man's being. Man lives more of his life in the realm of idea than of objective reality. His past and future (and also a large part his present), his aspirations, expectations, fancies, projects etc. all constitute this constant world of idea which may have some semblence with dreams but is the deeper reality of life. And dreams also are reality of life Recognition of them marks the secular tone of Mandukya Upanishad in it. But they are implicitly included in the general scope of desires which are directed towards external objects and which characterize both waking and dreaming

Sleep is a simple but indispensable secular value. We recognise its importance more keenly when it is denied to us in the event of some ailment or anxiety. Narcotics are given to induce it. Sleep is of various degrees and depths The deepest sleep is the dreamless sleep Perhaps there are no such separate terms in any other language as there are in sanskrit to distinguish between ordinary sleep which is partly disturbed by dreams and deep sleep which is devoid of dreams The recognition of these two kinds of sleep in the Mandukya Upanishad is a remarkable example of the insight of Indian sages into the depths of man's life and being. This insight also extends to the horizons of ultimate and transcendent spiritual reality.

Deep and dreamless sleep is metaphysically the link of human life with spiritual reality Practically it is the source of inflow of spiritual energy into man's bodily, sensory, sexual and mental life. It marks the frontier of man's being where life embraces intimately the spiritual reality and receives from it all the blessings of divine energy. It is through this deep and dreamless sleep that supreme spirit sustains life of all creatures as is maintained in the Vedanta One Upanishad definitely mentions the fact of the daily communion of man with supreme spirit in dreamless sleep. Chhandogya VIII-3-2. Every

creature is blessed with this supreme gift of God He gets it mostly in the middle of his ordinary sleep

This dreamless sleep is a supreme secular value which is nowhere else recognised so definitely as it is in the Mandukya Upanishad It sustains and refreshes the body, senses and mind of man and with these all the secular and even other kinds of values We realize its value when we or any of our close kins miss it during ailment or anxiety It can be treated as the measure of civilization, and modern civilization will be found to be at fault in so far as some of its environmental and psychological consequences are depriving man of the most precious divine blessing of deep and dreamless sleep

Thus understood, sleep is not a denial of the values of waking life but a deeper confirmation of them Not only the effect but also the fact of this deep sleep continues even in the waking state and invigorates it instead of obstructing it The deep sleep is akin to the transcendent state in so far as both are not to be characterized by the objective cognition and external things and inner ideas Bliss is mentioned in the Upanishad as another common feature of them both[56] Cognitive and dynamic occupation with objects is not the whole or the highest character of human existence It is only a necessary external condition of it Life is not joyful in this occupation This occupation affords only an objective and external content to it, which remains foreign so far as it is external Externality is akin to alienation. Joy is the inner and integral content of life Life is joyful only in so far as it tends to transcend cognitive objectivity and aspires to attain delightful integrality. Yoga or Samadhi is a mode of attaining this integrality Deep sleep is the natural counterpart of it, which is granted by providence to man Deep

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56 सुषुप्त स्थान एकीभूत. प्रज्ञान घन एवानन्दमयो ।

माण्डूक्य० ५

sleep is a sign of divine bounty to man and samadhi is the sign of elevation of man's being towards divine reality. The former is God's graceful disposition towards man, the latter marks man's ascendence towards Godhood. One is the solace and support of man's life and the other is the highest fulfilment of it.

The transcendent spiritual being marks the fourth dimension of reality and human existence. As it is transcendent, it is not describable. It is beyond thought and speech as it is integral. Thought and speech deal with duality. It can be described only in negative terms as incomprehensible, uncharacterizable, unthinkable, indescribable etc. The negative description intends only to indicate its transcendence of concepts which define finite objects and ideas of life. If any positive terms approximate it, it can be called tranquil, good and integral. It is integral experience in which the diversity of knowledge and distractions of life are harmonized and transcended This transcendent dimension marks the supreme reality of life. But its transcendence does not negate or nullify waking, dreaming and deep sleep, i e. objective cognition, ideation and deep sleep. Nor does it deprive them of reality and value On the other hand it invests them with greater reality. It is the source and support of whatever reality can be attributed to these dimensions of life. Sleep retains the blessing of transcendent reality in life. Samadhi restores it in these modes in life in a greater degree, and spiritual realization secures it in a more enduring and a more integrated form. But in all these modes it confirms the reality and value of normal modes of secular life which are comprehended in the first three dimensions of waking, dreaming and sleeping.

The secular values are not definitely and specifically mentioned in the Mandukya Upanishad But they are recognised in a general way in the form of dimensions of waking and dreaming, which involve a reference to objects which contain secular value. Sleep also is a secular value. With a remarkable insight the Mandukya Upanishad has discovered the deep and

profound importance of sleep for sustaining and refreshing other secular values By its kinship to sleep the transcendent dimension of reality and life also can be interpreted as supporting, sustaining and elevating secular values The four-dimensional character of Supreme Spirit comprehends life with all its values in the most integral and intimate manner

The social and ethical values are not at all indicated in the Mandukya Upanishad Tranquility and good which are mentioned as the characters of the fourth and transcendent dimension of reality can be understood as a cord of moral value with spiritual reality Tranquility, non-duality and cordiality is the core of good, as duality and discord is the core of evil Particular forms of good and evil are specific modes of this general character of ethical value Social situations are the conditions in which ethical values become the quality of man's conduct The social and ethical values can become the content of life that lies in the undefined gap between the waking and dreaming life on one side and the deep sleep and transcendent experience on the other

### 9. Values in the Taittiriya Upanishad

The Taittiriya Upanishad is a veritable treasury of Upanishadic axiology Many secular, social and ethical values find a clear and candid recognition in it Though, like other Upanishads, the Supreme Spirit is regarded as the supreme value in it also, yet other values are duly appreciated and are desired to flourish for a wholesome fulfilment of life The ethical values of truth, penance etc are given importance for the realization of Supreme Spirit as it is done in the Katha, Prashna and Mundaka Upanishads But the Taittiriya Upanishad is notable for its profuse and profound emphasis on secular and social values Perhaps in no other Upanishad the value of food finds such a prominent place and such an elaborate treatment as it does in the Taittiriya Upanishad The motto adopted for the 'grow more food compaign' is taken from this Upanishad[37] It

literally contains the idea of 'grow more food' in words of scriptural sanctity[57] Besides food, which is fundamental, secular values of body, senses sex etc. are also appreciated in this Upanishad It contains in the very beginning what is designated in its very text as a 'Scripture of secular values'[58] Life, wealth, etc also find recognition in it Life as vital being is emphasised as constituting the essence of man's existence[59] and food is recognised as a means which not only sustains but glorifies it.[60] The appreciation of some such secular values as are not ordinarily emphasised in axiological discussions, is a unique feature of the Taittiriya Upanishad The excellence of intellect, speech and hearing is desired in a prayer contained in what is described as the 'scripture of secular values'[61] The Taittiriya Upanishad is notable also for its prominent treatment of bliss or delight which is ultimately a spiritual value But sex is not denied its share of bliss in Taittiriya Upanishad[62] and incidentally it may be noted that Brahmacharya is not specifically mentioned in it, though it is to be treated as included in the wide scope of Tapas

Social values particularly of domestic relations, are recognised in the Taittiriya Upanishad The tradition of learning can be continued only through the teacher-disciple relationship which is given due importance in the Taittiriya Upanishad as it is done in many other Upanishads But the recognition of the primacy of maternal and paternal relationships is a unique distinction of Taittiriya Upanishad It is to be underlined in the

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57 अन्न बहु कुर्वीत । तैत्तिरीय० ३-९

58 अथात सहिताया उपनिषद व्याख्यास्याम: । तैत्तिरीय० १-३

59 प्राणो हि भूतानामायु: । तैत्तिरीय० २-३

60 अन्नेन वाव सर्वे प्राणा महीयन्ते । तैत्तिरीय० १-५

61 तैत्तिरीय० १-४

62 अमृतमानन्द इत्युपस्थे । तैत्तिरीय० ३-१०

context of denial of social values suggested in some statements of some other Upanishads The superiority of mother, which is notable feature of Indian culture and tradition, finds its first scriptural sanction (except for the Vedic hymns, glorifying the mother) in the Taittiriya Upanishad It is further to be noted that the glorification of the mother comes from the spiritual teacher as a mandate given to the discipline on the occasion of his completion of learning and his departure for his home.[63] The disciple is also instructed to marry and carry on the tradition of human generation[64]

The guest finds in the Taittriya Upanishad also the place of honour which he is given in other Upanishads also The regard for guest is a distinguishing feature of Indian social tradition Perhaps in no other society regard for guest is enjoined upon man as a duty with such religious spirit as is done in Indian society and scriptures

The general human relationship which forms the fundamental basis of all social values is very clearly highlighted in the Taittiriya Upanishad The 'shantipatha' adopted in it contains the famous Vedic prayer for common secular, social and spiritual good One statement of Taittiriya Upanishad is of supreme and exceptional value as it considers even spiritual realization as a common good and not as an individual aspiration[65] It deeply coordinates social values with the supreme spiritual value and debars all disregards of social relationship that may be implied in some statements of other Upanishads The social commonness of truth, spiritual realization and other values is a supreme truth of life clearly emphasised in the Taittriya Upanishad

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63 मातृदेवो भव । तैत्तिरीय० १-११

64 प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः । तैत्तिरीय० १-११

65 सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम् । तैत्तिरीय० १-३

Among the ethical values tapas or penance is emphasised in the Taittriya Upanishad. Truthfulness, penance, control of senses, tranquility of mind etc are important among ethical values which constitute the spiritual discipline of an aspirant of self-realization[66] Hospitality towards guests is enjoined upon a householder and is underlined in the instructions given by the preceptor to scholars departing for home after the completion of their training Regard for learned, virtuous and honourabble persons of society is treated as a notable cultural duty Charity is to be given with regard and not with disregard for the person to whom it is given[67] Virtues lead to purification of self and absolve a person of past evil All evil is dissolved in self-realization[68] which is the culmination of ethical and spiritual discipline.

Supreme spirit is the ultimate reality and ultimate basis of all existence[69] It is transcendent[70] but it is immanent in the existence of all beings in the form of delight and can be realized in the form of its excellence. This blissful supreme spirit sustains all beings[71] and constitutes the essence of man's existence. One who recognises that he is devoid of it is tormented by annihilation of being and one who realizes it in blissful experience of supreme spirit enjoys the fulness of this existence[72]

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66 तैत्तिरीय० १-९

67 श्रद्धया देयम् । अश्रद्धया अदेयम् । तैत्तिरीय० १-११

68 तैत्तिरीय० २-९

69 आकाश शरीरं ब्रह्म सत्यात्म प्राणारामं मन आनन्दम् ।
तैत्तिरीय० १-६

70 एतस्माद् विज्ञानमयाद् अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा आनन्दमय. । तैत्तिरीय २-५

71 येन जातानि जीवन्ति । तैत्तिरीय० ३-१

72 असन्नेव स भवति । असद् ब्रह्मेति वेद चेति । अस्ति ब्रह्मेति चेप् वेद ।
तैत्तिरीय० २-६

The recognition and elaboration in details of the blissful character of supreme spiritual reality and the emphasis on it as the ground and goal of life which is a cardinal tenet of the Upanishads, is a distinguishing feature of the Taittriya Upanishad Perhaps in no other Upanishad this cardinal truth of the Vedanta is so prominently emphasised and explained The realization of Supreme Spirit by Bhrigu through penance assesses the conduciveness of ethical discipline for spiritual realization and the importance of ethical values in the Vedanta The emphatic recognition of secular and social values along with the ethical values makes the Vedanta of the Taittriya Upanishad a complete and a wholesome gospel of life

**10. Values in the Aitareya Upanishad**

Aitareya Upanishad is like the Isha, Kena, and Mandukya among the smallest Upanishads But like these it also contains some unique and important ideas about the positive spiritualism which we seek to explore in the Upanishadic thought Like the Kena Upanishad, the Aitareya Upanishad also considers the supreme spirit as the supreme reality. But like the Katha and other Upanishads, it also regards the supreme spirit as the basic principle which supports and sustains the physical existence[73] and sensory and psychic life of man.[74] The various sensory functions are directed properly by virtue of the spirit within man

It consonance with this positive spiritualism, the Aitareya Upanishad contains in its second chapter a gospel of generation, the like of which is to be found perhaps only in the Brihadaranyaka The Taittiriya Upanishad affirms the spirituality of sexual pleasure and it also enjoins upon the students to procreate after the completion of their education The motherhood is given

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73 ऐतरेय० ३-१-१, २

74 ऐतरेय० ३-१-२

highest honour in it But the Aitareya Upanishad is remarkable for spiritualizing the principle of conception and for bestowing honour upon the pregnant and prospective mother It is now a common place of biological science that conception owing honour upon the pregnant and prospective mother is a result of the union, coalescing and cohesion of the male sperm and the female egg, which happens in the course of copulation which is a pleasure apart from this generative concurrence. The biological science is now trying to understand the principle of the compatibility and coherence of these two elements, originally external and alien to each other, which go to form the initial seed of existence of man.

Dr Tej Prakash Bhardwaj of the S.N. Medical College, Jodhpur has enlightened the bio-medical world by bringing to the notice of those interested the fact that the Upanishadic sages possessed a sound and scientific understanding of the principle of adaptation involved in the process of fertilization and conception (Trisamvit Prajnana—Jodhpur, Vol No. 1) Dr Bhardwaj has emphasised the biological and scientific (i e. empirical) aspect of the phenomenon of fertilization as then understood by the Upanishads It is necessary to go beyond the scientific and empirical phenomena which is accepted in all Upanishads. The Upanishads regard the supreme spirit to be the support of all existence The Kena, the Katha, the Aitareya Upanishads clearly recognise the supreme spirit as the ultimate force behind vital and sensory functions The supra-natural and spiritual grace can be realized more clearly in higher psychic experiences The Aitareya Upanishad has enlisted a number of such experiences.[75]

Besides the scientific truth of adaptation in fertilization as understood by Upanishadic sages and as explained in modern

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75 ऐतरेय० ३-१-२

terms by Dr. Bhardwaj, the spiritual principle implied in it is also to be recognised and the Upanishadic sages are to be credited all the more for recognising it in such ancient times. The spiritual aspect of the phenomenon concerned is indicated by the spiritual context and connotation of such words as atmbhuta bhavayati, bhavayitri, bhavayitavya etc employed in the Upanishad Atma means the spirit The spirit is non-dualistic. It is a denial or transcendence of opposition, conflict, disharmony discord etc Positively it can be understood as unity, union, communion etc Atmabhuta means that the supermatozoa becomes the very self of the female, that is it is identified, unified with the whole being of the female It is not mere biological adaptation but wider and deeper union of the two dimensions constituting the conception

Other terms used in this context express the spiritual dimension in human relations, which functions in the form of regard, care, affection etc These terms are derived from a common root 'bhu' which signifies existence The derivatives have developed, in the course of usage, more evident spiritual dimensions in their meaning, which signify the existence of man in a fuller sense The ontological existence signified by 'bhu' develops into richer and fuller psychic and spiritual existence This spiritual dimension of existence appears in human relations in the form of regard, consideration, affection, cause etc The Aitareya Upanishad contains a record of the original truth of society when it states that the female cares and fosters the foetus formed by her adaptation to the alien force of fertilization The practical and psychic attitude of the female towards the foetus is definitely spiritual, even when the attitude of the man is not so. The attitude of the primitive and barbaric man was definitely not so Civilization developed only when the human male cultivated by the company of female a slightly spiritual attitude, first towards the female and later towards the offspring The constitutional and biological capability of the female for adaptation is a natural dimension of spirituality which is

also given to females of animals. But the humanistic dimensions of spirituality have richly developed in the female of human species and have bestowed benign blessings on society.

This spiritual dimension of human mother is the seed of spirituality in human society which has developed and can attain richer develompments by the proper response of males to divine virtue of the woman The highly considerate attitude of the female towards the child in womb and later towards the child in arms is the root of all social and ethical values, and a proper response from males to it will be the greatest assurance of the establishment of these values in society.

## 11. Values in the Chhandogya Upanishad

The Chhandogya Upanishad is counted with the Brihadaranyaka among the bigger and older Upanishads. Ritualistic reflections, which abound in it indicate its kinship and continuity with the Brahmana part of the Vedas to which it belongs. It is of great importance from the point of view of spiritual instruction and guidance also The parables of Ushasti, Raikva, Satyakama, Upakosala, Shvetaketu, Sanatkumara, Indra, Virochana etc illustrate important spiritual tenets in a concrete and illuminating form. It is notable that due to its kinship with the ritualistic tradition it contains ample instructions and illustrations for practical than many other Upanishads. Like the Taittiriya it also contains a description of bliss as the essence of reality Spiritual discipline and spiritual metaphysics constitute the main content of it Supreme spirit is asserted in it also as the supreme value which sustains all existence and life.

The treatment of secular, social and ethical values is only incidental in this Upanishad, though it is no less important for this reason Sex, among the secular values, is conspicuous by its abssence in it But the value of life as vital being of man and as the condition of spiritual aspiration finds an emphatic recognition in it The isolation of water as more important for

the being of man and as the condition of spiritual aspiration finds an emphatic recognition in it The isolation of water as more important than even food characterizes the extent of secular realism contained in incidental references to secular grounds of spiritualism emphatically recognised in this Upanishad There is no indication of illusioriess or unreality of these secular bases of spiritual life Statements desparaging duality found in this Upanishad are to be interpreted axiologically and not metaphysically as it has been done in the tradition of the later Advaita

Ushasti has affirmed in the very first chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad that food is the basis of life and people live by assimilating food[76] All ritual and spiritual activities depend on vital existence of man[77] and vital existence of man depends of food[78] Ushasti had a crucial experience of the importance of food when he could not obtain it for several days and came to the point of starvation In that plight he begged some food from an elephant driver and saved himself with his wife, from starvation[79] The importance of food is again affirmed in the Chhandogya Upanishad in the context of the parable of Shavetaketu, son of sage Aruni As Svetketu was asked by his father to observe penance for spiritual realization, he observed a fast of a fortnight and he became so feeble that he was not able to learn and understand the Veda[80] Then Aruni his father explained to him the vital value of food He said "Food is the fuel of life Just as fire fades without fuel, so life also fades without food, and hence you are unable to understand the Veda You take

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76 सर्वाणि ह्वा इमानि भूतानि अन्नमेव प्रतिहरमाणा जीवन्ति ।
छान्दोग्य० १-११-९

77 छान्दोग्य० १-३-६

78 छान्दोग्य० १-३-६

79 छान्दोग्य० १-१०-४

80 छान्दोग्य० ६-७-२

food, your strength will be revived and then you will be able to understand the Veda[81] Svetaketa took food and revived his strength and understanding. His father Aruni asserted that it was revived by food.[82]

The Chhandogya Upanishad propounds a significantly materialistic theory of mind[83] and asserts that mind is made of the fine element in food, the less fine composes the body and the grossest of it passes as excretion[84] The materialistic basis of vitality and speech also is explained in Chhandogya Upanishad.[85] It is illustrated by example of milk, curd and butter in the sixth section of the sixth chapter of the Upanishad[86] It is remarkable that the importance of water also is recognised with food.[87] Such recognition is indicative of the climatic realism of the Upanishadic sages and is to be contrasted with the accusation of other-worldliness often made against them The superiority of physical strength is evidently asserted in the Chhandogya Upanishad[88] physical strength of course depends on food.[89] The climatic realism of the sages of this tropical country is to be noticed in the recognition of the importance of water both for agriculture and life and its consequent superiority over food.[90] A

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81 छान्दोग्य० ६-७-३

82 छान्दोग्य० ६-७-६

83 अन्नमय हि सोम्य मन: । छान्दोग्य० ६-५-४

84 य: स्थविष्ठो धातुस्तत्पुरीप भवति । यो मध्यमस्तन्मासम् । योऽणिष्ठ: तन्मन: । छान्दोग्य० ६-५-१

85 छान्दोग्य० ६-५-३, ४ ।

86 छान्दोग्य० ६-६-१ ।

87 आपोमय: प्राणो । छान्दोग्य० ६-७-१

88 बल वाव विज्ञानाद्भूय· । छान्दोग्य० ७-८-१

89 अन्नं वाव बलाद्भूय: । छान्दोग्य० ७-९-१

90 आपो वाव अन्नाद्भूय: । छान्दोग्य० ७-१०-१

significant reference to sex is found in section 13 of the second chapter of Chhandogya Upanishad [91]

The realization of the importance of energy, memory and hope is significant of the secular and human positivism that characterizes the approach of the sages of the Upanishads [92] It is true that all functions of life depend on vital power and energy,[93] though again the vital powers depend on food and water The cylic order of the physical and material basis of life signifies the importance of the cardinal factors which compose it

Sleep is given a spiritual status and appreciation for being a normal state in which every body reaches every day the threshold of the realm of supreme spirit, though one does not recognise and appreciate this natural spiritual privilege [94] The analogy of sleep does not discount the importance of waking state, on the other hand, it suggests a way through which we can advance towards spiritual excellence and also increase the energy and efficiency of our waking life by realizing the kinship of sleep with spiritual bliss, which is indicated in the Mandukya Upanishad [95]

The social values also find due recognition in the Chhandogya Upanishad though it is mainly in the context of spiritual tradition. It is said in the Chandogya Upanishad that a person who has realized the supreme spirit, should impart this knowledge to his elder son or to a dear disciple[96] and not to any

91 छान्दोग्य० २-१३ ।

92 छान्दोग्य० ७-१३-१, ७-१४-१ ।

93 छान्दोग्य० ७-१५-१ ।

94 छान्दोग्य० ८-३-२ ।

95 सुषुप्तस्थानः एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एव आनन्दमयः । माण्डूक्य० ५

96 इदं वाव तज्ज्येष्ठाय पुत्राय पिता ब्रह्म ब्रूयात् प्रणाय्याय वाऽन्तेवासिने । छान्दोग्य० ३-११-५

other person even if he is offered the kingdom of earth with all its wealth Spiritual knowledge is greater than all this wealth and is not measurable in terms of it[97] The relationship of teacher and disciple is considered as highly important in the Upanishadic tradition No knowledge can be purchased for money. But spiritual knowledge is the least purchaseable. It is such a unique knowledge that it can be obtained only as a gift of a merciful teacher As it is not intellectual knowledge, it can be obtained from direct spiritual inspiration as a lamp is lighted by a lighted lamp The Katha Upanishad regards the imparting as well as receiving of spiritual knowledge as a veritable miracle[98], and it is and undobutedly so The Chhandogya Upanishad affirms that only one who has received the grace of a teacher can obtain this spiritual knowledge.[99] Only that knowledge which is received from a teacher becomes fruitful.[100]

The domestic relations are also appreciated in the Chhandogya Upanishad at one place It is said that one who knows the five persons who guard the gates of heaven, is blessed with heroic sons[101] This is an evident appreciation of glorious progeny. Other domestic relationships also are highly honoured in the Chhandogya Upanishad It is said that one should treat his

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97 नान्यस्मै कस्मैचन यद्यप्यस्मा इमामद्भिः परिगृहीतां धनस्य पूर्णाम्
दद्यात् एतदेव ततोभूयः । छान्दोग्य० ३-११-६

98 आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा
आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ।। कठ० १-२-७

99 आचार्यवान्पुरुषो वेद । छान्दोग्य० ६-१४-२

100 आचार्याद्‌ ह एव विद्या विदिता साधिष्ठं प्रापतीति ।
छान्दोग्य० ४-९-३

101 य एतानेवं पञ्च ब्रह्मपुरुषान्स्वर्गस्य द्वारपान् वेद अस्य कुले वीरो
जायते । छान्दोग्य० ३-१३-६

father, mother, brother and sister with love and regard, and should not utter improper words to them[102]

Among the ethical values, tapas or penance charity, simplicity, non-violence, truthfulness, reverence, celebacy, sacrifice, learning, matrimonial fidelity, and honesty are recognised in the Chhandogya Upanishad Sacrifice, learning and charity constitute the first among the three pillars of righteous life Tapas or penance is the second pillar and service of the preceptor with the observation of celebacy is the third[103] Tapas or penance, charity, simplicity, non-violence and truthfulness are treated as noble gifts[104] Reverence is bracketed with penance in Chhandogya as in some other Upanishads[105]

Celebacy is always treated as a cardinal virtue in the Upanishadic tradition Sage Aruni instructs his son Svetaketu to observe celebacy as a condition of spiritual education.[106] Sacrifice is said to imply celebacy or Brahmacharya in a wider sense as understood in the Chhandogya Upanishad[107] Silence also is treated as a mode of Brahmacharya[108] Brahmacharya is the

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102 छान्दोग्य० ७-१५-२

103 त्रयो धर्म-स्कन्धा यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति प्रथमस्तप एव द्वितीयो ब्रह्मचर्याचार्यकुलवासी तृतीयोऽत्यन्तममात्मानमाचार्यकुलेऽवसादयन् एते पुण्यलोका भवन्ति । छान्दोग्य० २-२३-१

104 अथ यत्तपोदानमार्जवमहिंसा सा सत्यवचममिति ता अस्य दक्षिणाः ।
छान्दोग्य० ३-१७-४

105 श्रद्धा तप इत्युपासते । छान्दोग्य० ५-१०-१

106 श्वेतकेतुर्हारुणेय आस । त ह पितोवाच श्वेतकेतो वस ब्रह्मचर्यम् ।
छान्दोग्य० ६-१-१

107 अथ यद् यज्ञ इत्याचक्षते ब्रह्मचर्यमेव । छान्दोग्य० ८-५-१

108 यन्मौनमित्याचक्षते ब्रह्मचर्यमेव । छान्दोग्य० ८-५-२

essence of man's existence and it is only by virtue of Brahmacharya in a wide sense, that is by a spiritual attitude to life, that such an enduring existence is secured in life as will not be anihilated like other modes of being with which we identify ourselves and which are nihilated in course of time leaving us a life devoid of any positive content[109]

Matrimonial or sexual fidelity is regarded as a great virtue and is non-stealing King Ashvapati prides on the moral standard of the people of his kingdom and boasts that 'there is no thief in my kingdom; nor is there a man with loose conduct or one who transgresses matrimonial fidelity. When there is no such man, there is no question of being a woman who transgrasses matrimonial fidelity.[110] Incidentally in this context, the Chhandogya Upanishad hints at the crux of sexual morality. King Asvapati thinks that man is primarily responsible for matrimonial infidelity in society Woman is constitutionally vulnerable in the sphere of sexual oppression. Man is not so Woman cannot force violation of sexual fidelity on man, but man can do so by physical and organised aggression. Woman cannot organise for this purpose Hence sexual morality in society is the primary responsibility of man This sexual truth of the Chhandogya Upanishad is to be recognised by modern legislations, who like Indian legislations, are inclined to impose legal responsibilities for sexual licence upon women instead of men in the context of prevention of prostitution' The above attitude of the Chhandogya Upanishad is to be contrasted with the derogatory attitude of most of the spiritual teachers towards women.

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109 तदेव ह्यात्मा न नश्यति यं ब्रह्मचर्येण अनुविन्दते ।

छान्दोग्य० ८-५-३

110 न स्वैरी स्वैरिणी कुतः । छान्दोग्य० ५-११-५

The ethical value of conduct is also recognised in the Chhandogya Upanishad. Karma or action is an event in time It is temporal. Hence the fruit of it is also regarded as temporal It cannot be enduring or eternal by its very nature. Whatever is achieved by good act in this or other life is ultimately perishable[112] Those who ignore self and devote only to acts do not make full use of their life[113] Moral acts are valuable but not adequate for the attainment of spiritual realization. Yet good conduct is better than bad conduct Those who indulge in immoral acts are damned to lower status in next birth, while those who devote to moral acts attain nobler births in future lives and obtain opportunities for making higher endeavours for attaining the spiritual destiny of life[114]

In the metaphysics of the Vedanta, time and action is recognised as only one dimension of reality. Hence it can never be adequate for the attainment of reality which is multi-dimensional It is only by being incorporated in the transcendent dimension of reality that it can fruitfully contribute to spiritual discipline as well as secular life

The supreme spirit is certainly the supreme value in the Vedanta and all other values derive their value from it It sustains them and endows them with value. Supreme spirit is the source of vitality, hope, memory, energy, strength, memory,

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111 तद्य इह कर्मजितो लोक. क्षीयत । छान्दोग्य० ८-१-६

112 एवमेव अमुत्र पुण्यजितो लोकः क्षीयत । छान्दोग्य० ८-१-६

113 छान्दोग्य० ८-१-६ ।

114 तद्य इह रमणीयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते रमणीयां योनिमापद्येरन् ......य इह कपूयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते कपूयां योनिमापद्येरन् ।

छान्दोग्य० ५-१०-७

concentration, will speech, action etc.[115] Supreme spirit is the bridge between different realms of existence. It supports and connects them[116] All other modes of existence and value are sustained by it But it is to be noted that they are negated by it, as is generally believed to be the view of Vedanta and as is maintained by followers of Sankara. Supreme spirit is the supreme reality and ultimate being.[117] All beings are rooted in it and are sustained by it[118] That supreme spirit is the essence of our being[119] It is to be realized by moral conduct, spiritual education and spiritual discipline The earthly existence of man and secular, social and ethical values will find their final fulfilment in this blissful realization

## 12. Values in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

Briharanyaka Upanishad is the magnum opus of Upanishadic literature. It is the biggest and the most voluminous among the Upanishads It is highly important from the philosophical point of view also Many of the cardinal doctrines of the Vedanta find their authentic statement in it. The spiritual teachings of Yajnavalkya, the greatest spiritual sage of ancient times, are contained in it in the form of his dialogues and discussions with king Janaka, several sages and his philosophic wife Maitreyi As it belongs to a Brahmana tradition, there is like the Chhandogya Upanishad, a reflection of Brahmanic ritualism and symbolism in its continuity and contents But the

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115 छान्दोग्य० ७-२६-१ ।

116 अथ य आत्मा स सेतुः विधृति एषा लोकानामसम्भेदाय ।
छान्दोग्य० ८-४-१

117 सदेव सोम्य इदमग्र आसीत् । छान्दोग्य० ६-२-१

118 सन्मूला. सोम्येमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः सदायतनाः सत्प्रतिष्ठाः ।
छान्दोग्य० ६-८-४

119 स आत्मा तत्वमसि । छान्दोग्य० ६-१०-३

main theme of it, like other Upanishads, is the propounding of the Supreme spiritual reality of Brahman.

Brahman is the ultimate reality and support of all existence and all beings It is of the nature of bliss All beings live by a fraction of this bliss[120] Blissful Brahman sustains and invigorates our body, mind and senses The value of secular modes of life is nowhere denied in the Brihadaranyka Discussion of secular values occupies a considerable part of this Upanishad

Undoubtedly there are some statements and events in this Upanishad which seem to deprive secular values of all importance The event of Yajnavalkya's renunciation of householder's life is notable in this context Yajnavalkya's renunciation itself is a proof of the fact that normal life of a householder is not adequate for spiritual realization But Yajnavalkya is presented as a realized man before renunciation Hence it seems that householder's life is no obstruction to it Yajnavalkya is renouncing household only as a routine of a spiritual life But the truth which he reveals to his wife on this occasion that 'man cannot attain imoratality by wealth' or other material means, is notable It is true that no external or material means can be adequate for spiritual realization, yet it does not signify the futility of secular values Physical existence of man depends on them. There are statements in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which signify the importance of secular values Vital being, mind, food etc are among them They are glorified as it has been done in some other Upanishads

The importance of vital existence is evidently recognised in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Vital existence is the essence

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120 एतस्यैव आनन्दस्य अन्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति ।

बृहदारण्यक० ४-३-३२

of all organs of the body.[121] It is the glory and strength of man.[122] Vital existence no doubt depends on assimilation of food, but food is assimilated by the intrinsic energy of vital being of man[123] There is a constitutional coordination between food and vital being of man It is by virtue of this coordination that the vital being of man is satisfied by assimilation of food.[124] It is true that without the assimilating power of vital being of man, food by itself will not support man's existence. It fails to do in case of such sick persons whose power of assimilation and digestion becomes too weak Yet the dependence of body and vital being on food also is undeniable Vital being withers in the absence of food.[125] This fact is illustrated in the example of Ushasti and Svetaketu in the Chhandogya Upanishad. Though the Brihadranyaka Upanishad consideres coordination of vital being and food as the higher truth, yet it emphasised strongly the importance of food and dependence of man's physical existence on it

Food is the support of vital existence of man. Vital existence is the support of man's sensory and organic life. Vital being is a reality, though spirit is a higher reality. Spirit is the reality of reality which sustains vital existence[126] It is the life of life[127]

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121 प्राणो वा अङ्गानां रसः। बृहदारण्यक० १-३-१९

122 प्राणा वै यशः। बृहदारण्यक० १-२-६

123 अन्नमद्यतेऽनेनैव तदद्यत इह प्रतितिष्ठति। बृहदारण्यक० १-३-१७

124 तस्माद्यदनेनान्नमत्ति ते नैतास्तृप्यन्त्येवं ह वा एनं स्वा अभिसंविशन्ति। बृहदारण्यक० १-३-१८

125 शुष्यति वै प्राण ऋते अन्नात्। बृहदारण्यक० ५-१२-१

126 सत्यस्य सत्यम्। बृहदारण्यक० २-३-६

127 प्राणस्य प्राणम्। बृहदारण्यक० ४-४-१८

Wealth is a material value. Upanishad find it inadequate for spiritual realization. Nachiketa in the Katha Upanishad and Yajnavalkya in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad declare its inadequacy. But it has value in life as its means and support. Even the sages of Upanishads seek wealth as a gift from kings. Yajnavalkya accepts the cows with golden horns from king Janaka as a gift for his unsurpassed spiritual knowledge. When he was asked by King Janaka whether he came for cattle-wealth or to discuss philosophy, he candidly replied that he came for both[128] When king Janaka held a spiritual symposium and promised a thousand cows with golden horns for the greatest spiritualist, Yajnavalkya asked his disciples to drive away the cows without entering into any discussion with the sages assembled there. When asked by the latter whether he was the greatest spiritualist he modestly replied, "We bow to the spiritualist. At present we want only the cows"[129]

Though Yajnavalkya later renounced the life of a householder, yet his whole attitude to life seems to be synthetic, an attitude in which the material or secular values are duly recognised and reconciled with the supreme spiritual value which sustains them Duality is deparaged in Brihadaranyaka, but that does not necessarily mean an absolute condemnation of secular value It can well be interpreted as implying the futility of secular values when they are divorced from supreme spirit It is the spiritual alienation in life which deprives secular life of all meaning and value. In an attitude of spiritual integrity and affiliation, all secular values become glorified by integration with spirit.

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128 उभयमेव सम्राट् । बृहदारण्यक० ४-१-१

129 नमो वयं ब्रह्मिष्ठाय कुर्मो, गोकामा एव वयं स्म इति ।

बृहदारण्यक० ३-१-२

The physical elements are recognised as real[130] though supreme spirit is the reality of reality, i.e. supreme reality which inspires and integrates physical existence[131]. Food and vital being are given due importance as indicated above Sex also is given a figurative as well as an actual attention in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad The similarity of sexual ecstasy with spiritual ecstasy[132] is not casual but it indicates a deeper kinship of sex with spirit of which there are ample evidences in Indian thought and tradition A crucial point of this kinship is the commonly delightful character of sex and spirit Like the Chhandogya Upanishad, the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also regards sex as a source of delight and considers sex organs as the central seat of all delights in life.[133] At a place sex urge is recognised as the seat of reality and women are declared to be the ruling deity of it[134] The sexual poles of male and female are represented as the cosmic expressions of the original spiritual reality from which male and female being of different species is described as emanating[135] Male and female sexes are complementary poles of reality which together compose the whole of it[136]

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130 सत्यं च भूत पचकम् । सत्यस्य सत्यं च पर आत्मा ।
बृहदारण्यक० शांकर भाष्य ३-६-१

131 यह पृथिवीमन्तरो यमयत्पेप त आत्मा अन्तर्यामी अमृत: ।
बृहदारण्यक० ३-७-३

132 बृहदारण्यक० ४-३-२१ ।

133 सर्वेपामानन्दा नामुपस्थ एकायनम् । बृहदारण्यक० २-४-११

134 काम एव यस्यायतनम् . . . . तस्य मा देवतेति स्त्रिय: इति होवाच ।
बृहदारण्यक० ३-९-११

135 बृहदारण्यक० १-४-४ ।

136 बृहदारण्यक० १-४-३ ।

Inspite of the renunciation of household by Yajnavalkya, it is notable that Brihadaranyaka delineates bipolar sexual creation as a self-expression of original being, ends with an elaborate treatment of sexual activity, represented as a sacrifice. It is stated that the semen is the essence of man's vital being[137]

The creator has created woman to receive semen[133] The vagina of woman is symbolized as the Vedi for sexual sacrifice and the figure has been worked out in details[139] The sexual act of cohabitation also is described.[140] But the purpose of it is not indulgence but production of glorious and heroic children[141] as it is intended in Chhandogya Upanishad also[142]

The importance of progeny is indicated by the long pedigrees of sages given at the end of some chapters in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad The maternal titles of these sages are notable They indicate the antiquity of learning and spiritual quest in India during a time when maternal tradition of society had not completely ceased

The phenomena of fear and fearlessness are treated with sufficient importance in the Brihadaranyaka Fear is a negative secular value which devaluates all other values of life Fearlessness is spiritual at root, but secular in its effects and benefits. It enhances the value of all other values of life. The principle of fear and fearlessness is essentially spiritual Spirit is the supreme reality. It is non-dualistic. Fearlessness is the

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137 वृहदारण्यक० ६-४-१ ।

138 वृहदारण्यक० ६-४-२ ।

139 तस्या वेदिरुपस्थो । वृहदारण्यक० ६-४-३

140 वृहदारण्यक० ६-४-५ ।

141 सा त्वं वीरवती भव । वृहदारण्यक० ६-४-२८

142 अस्य कुले वीरो जायते । छान्दोग्य० ३-१२-६

fruit of realization of non-dual spirit which by its nature is fearless[143] The original being felt afraid as he was alone in the beginning But why should he feel afraid, when there was no one else. We should be afraid only of another person. Yet a lonely man feels afraid Why ? Because he is not supported by spiritual non-duality. The absence of spiritual non-duality reflect a danger from duality and hence loneliness entails fear. Fearlessness is ensured in the realization of spiritual non-duality (exemplified in love and friendship) which wards off fear of duality which can culminate in dangerous antagonism.

Social values are not so concretely and elaborately enshrined in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as they are in the Taittriya Upanishad But the domestic life of some sages, and the long pedigrees of sages and the generative sacrifice with which the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad ends are evidences of their recognition in it Sage Ushasti with his young wife testifies to the value of food, wealth, sex and marriage by his example. So does Yajnavalkya with his two wives, and the wealth he gladly receives from king Janaka, inspite of his final renunciation of householder's life. These may not be conducive to spiritual realization and immortality.[145] But these are necessary for personal life which is the necessarily condition of all spiritual aspirations.

Social values consist in social relations some of which are cogenital and some of which have been developed as a cultural acquisition in the course of civilization. Parental relations are cogenital and relations of kins are derived from them. Other relations which are not cogenital or relations of kinship

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143 अभयं वै जनक प्राप्तोऽसि । बृहदारण्यक० ४-२-४

144 द्वितीयाद् वै भयं भवति । बृहदारण्यक० १-४-२

145 अमृतस्य तु नाशास्ति वित्तेन । बृहदारण्यक० २-४-२

are a distinct humanistic achievement of men They are an evidence of assertion and expression of spirit in human life. In Indian tradition this achievement reached its climax in the conception of whole society as a small family (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam) This conception of the world as a family is the social fulfilment of the spiritual non-dualism which is the cardinal philosophic principle of Upanishadic thought. The importance of social relations and social values embodied in them are recognised and appreciated in some of the Upanishads like the Taittriya Upanishad But the Upanishads in general are not duly attentive towards the social values But this is only an apparent mode of Upanishadic thought and it is so due to the influence of two factors—one of them is mental and the other is environmental Mentally the Upanishads are directed intensely towards spiritual thinking, i.e towards quest of ultimate reality which is found to be spiritual in Upanishads Secondly the Upanishadic thought developed in the solitudes of forest hermitages through the discourses and discussions, between the teachers and disciples, in which there was little occasion of emphasising any other relationship except the teacher-disciple relationship This was the only relationship which was important from the point of view of spiritual quest and continuation of it

Yet several social relationships are recognised and appreciated in the Upanishads The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is largely devoted to philosophic discussions that seemed to be fashionable in those times in the hermitages of sages as well as courts of kings Hence there is little scope in it for emphasising any other relationship Yet it is notable that the general spiritual principle of social relationship and its sexual and congenital basis are asserted in it more definitely than perhaps in any other Upanishad The deepest secret of social life of man is revealed in a statement of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that human society aspires to become an integrated whole by

knowledge of supreme spirit'.[146] Though the domestic relationship is disparaged in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as being non-conducive to spiritualization[147] in the context of renunciation, yet cogenital relationships are deeply appreciated in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad The metaphysical principle of creation has been conceived in it, on the analogy of conjugal sex The very first chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad contains a glorification of the vital principle (prana) and after it a delineation of creation on the analogy of conjugal sex. The original being is said to be sad in his solitude He did not enjoy his existence He required an other to enjoy with, he became, by his will, a joint couple, a unity with duality, like a woman and a man in deep embrace Then it separated into two complementary parts which became husband and wife.[148] This statement recognises sexual dimension and duality as the intrinsic and original principle of reality. Woman is said to fill the vacuum and vacancy in man's life, which is signified by akasa or empty space (1-4-3).[149] After expressing itself in the form of woman and man, the male part of the original being conjugated with the female Thus the human race came and continues into existence.[150]

The conjugal sex represents a fundamental truth of existence and life. It is not merely a physical or biological phenomenon but a deeper spiritual principle also It is not only the

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146 तदाहुर्यद् ब्रह्मविद्यया सर्वं भविष्यन्तो मनुष्या मन्यन्ते ।

बृहदारण्यक० १-४-६

147 एतद् ह स्म वै तत्पूर्वे विद्वांस. प्रजां न कामयन्ते । किं प्रजया करिष्याम येषा नोऽयमात्मायं लोकः इति । बृहदारण्यक० ४-४-२०

148 ततः पतिश्च पत्नी चाभवताम् । बृहदारण्यक० १-४-३

149 तस्मादयमाकाशः स्त्रिया पूर्यत । बृहदारण्यक० १-४-३

150 ततो मनुष्या अजायन्त । बृहदारण्यक० १-४-३

body of man and woman which demands unity in conjungation, but the deeper spirit in their hearts also seeks spiritual unity through conjugation. Creation is a self-expression of reality for enhancing the delight of its being and conjugal sex is a basic biological mode of restoring the original spiritual unity with increased delight. Man and woman are not complete without each other[151] There is no meaning or joy in their isolated existence. Hence man desires to have a wife and also children from her.[152] It is the spirit in man which seeks them for the fulfilment of life[153]

Besides women and wife, the son also is glorified in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad The son, preferably the eldest son, is regarded in the Upanishads as the most deserving person to receive the invaluable spiritual knowledge from the learned father But the Brihadaranyaka emphasises the socio-ethical importance of the son also The human world can be conquered by a man only through a son.[154] Man's life is short and limited. It is only through and with the help of son that the social and spiritual aspirations of man can be fulfilled more satisfactorily, and ethical responsibilities also can be discharged more fruitfully. The dying father is represented as saying to the son that 'Thou art my spirit, thou art my sacrifice, thou art my world[155] Such a view affirms the spiritual unity (through continuity) of knowledge, morality and social existence It is said that the father enters spiritually into the son and fulfills through him

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151 अकृत्स्न एव तावन्मन्यते । वृहदारण्यक० १-४-१७ ।

152 तस्मादपि एतर्हि एकाकी कामयते जाया मे स्यात् अथ प्रजायेय ।
वृहदारण्यक० १-४-१७

153 वृहदारण्यक० १-४-७ ।

154 सोऽयं मनुष्यलोक. पुत्रेणैव जय्यः । वृह० १-५-१६

155 त्वं ब्रह्म त्व यज्ञ· त्वं लोक इति । वृह० १-५-१७

the duties which he fails to fulfil during his life-time. The son relieves him of the remorse of this failure. The son completes, confirms and consolidates the existence of father in the world, through the cosmic spirit which inhabits it and continues its cosmic function through progeny.[156]

It is notable that the sexual, conjugal and domestic and social values are treated in the Briharanyaka Upanishad with such profound insight into their human and spiritual significance

The ethical values do not find any considerable treatment in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad It is largely devoted to the discussion of spiritual metaphysics Its main interest is to explore the reality and not so much to prescribe ways of its realization Yet, as in cases of the secular values of food and vital being and in case of social values of man's conjugal and congenital relationship with wife and son, so in case of ethical values important fundamental principles are propounded in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Virtue is regarded as the supreme value and supreme truth in Brihadaranyaka long before Plato recognised it. Good is said to be the truth.[157] It is notable in the context of those Vedantic statements which seem to signify the inconsonance of virtue with ultimate spiritual reality and temporal character of virtuous conduct. The consonance of virtuous life with spiritual realization can be understood by distinguishing the metaphysical difficulty of correlating temporal means with the eternal end from the reasonableness of reconciling virtuous conduct with the dynamic dimension of reality which is recognised evidently in the Isha Upanishad[158] and is implied in the attribution of creative will

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156 आत्मना हि कर्म करोति । वृह० १-४-१७

157 यो वै स धर्मः स· सत्यं वै तत् । वृह० १-४-१४

158 तदेजते । ईश० ५

to supreme spirit in the Brihadaranyaka and other Upanishads.[159] The Brihadaranyaka clearly recognises the supreme spirit as the original source of all activity.[160] The self, here cannot be identified with the body, as Sankara has tried to do, because the body cannot act without the spirit which is the ultimate source of energy inhabiting it The ethical being of man is emphasisted in a statement in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which declares that man's being is constituted by his conduct It becomes good by good acts and evil by evil acts [161]

It is true that the supreme spirit is transcendent, though it is also immanent and energises life and conduct But these two dimensions of spirit cannot be antagonistic to each other Hence they must be conceived as consonant with each other. The virtue contains the truth of spirit in so far as it is altruistic and above ego and thus enters the realm of non-duality which characterizes spiritual reality. Virtuous conduct is not without its real connection with the spiritual source of life and activity. From the point of view of technical logic of a spiritual metaphysics it is true that the supreme spirit does not increase by good acts, nor does it decrease by evil acts It only means that the supreme spirit is complete in its being and is not to be completed by good acts, and that evil acts do not cloud it in reality the divine light of it which shines within the heart of every man But virtuous conduct does take a man closer to reality and dispels the darkness of evil and reveals more the light of spirit that underlies his being It is again in the sense of spiritual transcendence that the realized are said

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159 स द्वितीयमेच्छत् ।   वृह० १-४-३

160 आत्मना हि कर्म करोति ।   वृह० १-४-१७

161 साधुकारी साधुर्भवति पापकारी पापोभवति ।   वृह० ४-४-५

पुण्यो वे पुण्यकर्मणा भवति पापः पापेनेति ।   वृह० ३-२-१३

to be unaffected by evil[162] This should not be interpreted to afford a licence to the realized, which is absurd, but only to mean that those who realize the spirit get themselves beyond the possibility of doing evil to others and are absolved of the effects of evils committed by them in the past This is natural in so far as spiritual realization is also redemption and salvation of man They are also not affected by the evil acts of others in the sense that they do not react to them in a way in which a man susceptible to evil acts

Sraddha and Brahmacharya are mentioned as moral virtues which are conducive to spiritual realization.[163] Faith and reverence are necessary for realizing transcendental spiritual reality which cannot be completely explained through language and reason. Brahamcharya, both in the narrower sense of celebacy in early youth and in the wider sense of restraint of senses, is valuable as a discipline which is necessary for limiting the sensuous excesses of life which are always likely and which are now increasing in modern society and civilization, and for directing life towards the goal of human happiness, mental peace and spiritual bliss which alone can constitute a satisfying end of life

The secular, social and ethical values are not considered in the Upanishads to be entirely empirical Their empirical value is founded on their spiritual lineage. As in other Upanishads, so also in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the supreme spirit is asserted as the supreme and ultimate reality. Sankara rightly maintains that supreme spirit is the ultimate meaning

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162 नैनं पाप्मा तरति . . नैनं पाप्मा तपति ।   वृह० ४-४-२३

163 हृदये ह्येव श्रद्धा प्रतिष्ठिता भवति ।   वृह० ३-९-२१

ब्रह्मचर्यं वत्स्याव इति ।   वृह० ६-२-४

of all Upanishads[164] The supreme spirit is the deepest, the most intimate reality which underlies all existence and life.[165] It is the master[166] and controller of all existence and life[167] It is not wholly a transcendent Power of Deism but it governs and controls existence and life from within[168] It is the source and basis of all experience[169] Like the Kena and some other Upanishads, the Brihadaranyaka also regards the supreme spirit as the ultimate power behind our senses and mind. It calls it like the Kena Upanishad, the ear of ear, the eye of eye etc[170] The supreme spirit is an integral reality. One who entertains alienation disintegrates consciousness and alienates integral reality and vitiates the delight of life which emanates from integrity of spiritual experience[171]

The supreme spirit is intelligent,[172] but it is integral intelligence which manifests in delight. Blissful experience is the essence of supreme spirit[173] Its infinite delight sustains all existence and beings All beings live by fraction of the delight of

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164 य सर्वोपनिपदर्थो ब्रह्म । वृह० भाष्य० ५-१-१

165 स त आत्मा सर्वान्तर· । वृह० ३-४-१

166 स वा अयमात्मा सर्वेपा भूतानामविपति. । वृह० २-५-१५

167 एप त आत्मा अन्तर्यामी अमृतः । वृह० ३-७-३

168 आत्मा अन्तर्यामी । वृह० ३-७-३

169 अयमात्मा सर्वानुभू. । वृह० २-५-१९

170 वृहदारण्यक० ३-४-२ ।

171 अतोऽन्यदार्तम् । वृह० ३-५१

172 प्रज्ञान घन· । वृह० ४-५-१३

173 विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म ।

वृह० ३-९-२८

the supreme spirit.[174] When a man is deprived of it by excess of alienation in life, his existence becomes miserable and intolerable.

Metaphysically this blissful supreme spirit is the ultimate reality, but practically it is the supreme end and supreme value of life It is the supreme value which affords value to all other values of life. Non-dualistic spiritual bliss is the dearest and the most desirable thing in life It is dearer than wealth, wife, son etc These are viewed as having value and delight in an external sense. Ultimately the supreme spirit is the dearest and should be adored as the dearest thing.[175] On two occasions Yajnavalkya the great sage of the Upanishads declares that all other things are dear and delightful only on account of the supreme spirit, that is, only in the respect in which they embody the non-dualistic truth of supreme spirit[176] Material values bestow delight only in the respect in which they signify the non-dualistic spirit, and are devoid of value and joy if they are merely external facts

The idea of supreme spirit as supreme value is not adverse to the importance of other values but on the other hand it reveals the deeper source and secret of them, without understanding and appreciating which these other values become valueless and joyless Man can achieve highest joy and fulfilment by realizing the ultimate spiritual basis of life and its values. Without such a realization even a life full of external values will become empty, miserable and intolerable. It becomes evident to numerous individuals in the general situations of inner

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174 एतस्य ह वै आनन्दस्य मात्रामुपजीवन्ति भूतानि। वृह० ४-३-३२

175 आत्मानमेव प्रियमुपासीत। वृह० १-४-८

176 आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रिय भवति। वृह० २-४-५

आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति। बृह० ४-५-६

loneliness in the crowded and busy life of modern civilization and more intensely in critical situations of solititude in personal life.

## 13. Values in the Svetasvatara Upanishad

The Svetaswatara Upanishad is believed to be a later Upanishad among those ten upanishads which have the historic distinction of being commented upon by Sankara Yet it enjoys the credit of being quoted by him in his commentaries Hence it is treated as the eleventh standard Upanishad It is a dominantly metaphysical Upanishad It is wholly devoted to the treatment and description of Brahman as the ultimate reality and to the blissful benefits of self-realization It is a most Upanishadic Upanishad in the sense that there are no ritualistic or cosmological diversions in it as are found in most of the bigger Upanishads. It is so completely metaphysical or spiritual that there are scarce references in it, to any other values, secular, social or ethical Without any ritualistic or cosmological preliminaries as are found in the Chhandogya or the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, it plunges directly and deeply into the question of ultimate reality which it considers to be the source and basis of all existence. It opens with an inquiry by the sages as to what is the ultimate cause of the existence ? What is the ultimate source of our being ? By what do we live ? What is our support ? Several alternatives like time, nature, destiny, chance etc are contemplated and rejected Finally the Supreme Spirit is affirmed as the only answer to all above questions It is the cause of the universe, the source of our being and sustenance of our existence It controls all other principles which are contemplated as answers to the above questions The supreme spirit as the ultimate reality is arrived at not by any argument but by a spiritual vision

secured by the sages in meditation[177] the spider occurs in it also as in the Mundaka Upanishad, but it is to be understood to signify the denial of an external material cause of the universe and the refusal to regard Supreme Spirit merely as an efficient cause.[178]

The first three verses of the Svetaswatara Upanishad contain in succint style the questions, alternative answers and the final answer. And after that 'the whole Upanishad is devolved to the description of the nature of the supreme spirit, the way of realizing it and the fruit of self-realization. There are no ritualistic, symbolic, or cosmological diversions in it. Nor are there, in it, any references to secular, social and ethical values as are available in many of the Upanishads. But the spiritual metaphysics of the Svetavatara Upanishad is positivistic in the sense that there is no indication in it of the unreality or the illusioriness of the world and life with its secular and social values Though the supreme spirit is transcendent.[179] It is notable that the word maya occurs in it significanctly unlike any other older Upanishad, but it stands for the power of supreme spirit and not for the illusioness of the world. The physical world is said to be perishable, but it is not unreal The supreme spirit

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177 ते ध्यान-योगानुगता अपश्यन्
देवात्मशक्ति स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् ।
य कारणानि निखिलानि तानि
कालात्मयुक्तान्यधितिष्ठत्येक: । श्वेताश्वतर० १-३

178 श्वेताश्वतर० ६-१० ।
यथोर्णनाभि: सृजते । मुण्डक० १-१-७

179 श्वेताश्वतर० ४-६ ।

governs it.[180] Individual and the world are both secure in the shade of the Supreme Spirit[181]

The supreme spirit is the support of life and the cause of liberation[182] As the cause of creation and the support of life and the cause of liberation, the supreme support of all values of life As bestower of peace, health immortality it is the source of highest values in life.[183] Peace, immortality and bliss are, according to Svetasvatara the highest values and these are the fruit of self-realization Immortality is repeatedly emphasised in the Svetasvatara,[184] but peace and bliss are cardinal values which form the foundation of all other social, secular and ethical values

Secular values of health, freedom from disease, lightness of the body lustre of the complexion, sweetness of the voice and fragrance of the body are prominent among the initial fruit of course of spiritual aspiration[185] Freedom from disease and from senility characterize the body which is illumined by the

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180 विद्याऽविद्ये ईशते यस्तु सोऽन्य । श्वेताश्वतर० ५-१

181 व्यक्ताऽव्यक्त भरते विश्वमीश । श्वेताश्वतर० १-८

182 धर्मावह पापनुद भगेश
ज्ञात्वात्मस्थममृत विश्वधाम ।
श्वेताश्वतर० ६-६

183 निचाय्येमा शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति । श्वेताश्वतर० ४-११

184 य एतद् विदुरमृता भवन्ति । श्वेताश्वतर० ३-१
ईश त ज्ञात्वामृता भवन्ति । श्वेताश्वतर० ३-७

185 लघुत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्व
वर्णप्रसाद स्वरसौष्ठवं च
गन्ध. शुभो मूत्रपुरीषमल्प
योग-प्रवृत्ति प्रथमा वदन्ति
श्वेताश्वतर० २-१३

fire of spiritual discipline[186] Food as a material value is not mentioned in it, like some other upanishads, but the recognition of some unique values like lightness of the body, sweetness of the voice, fragrance of body, youthfullness etc is a remarkable feature of Svetasvatara Upanishad No other Upanishads have visualized them. These values are not emphasised in modern axiological philosophies also But they are highly important in life and reference to them in the Svetsvatara Upanishad in those ancient times is remarkable. This indicates the minuteness with which it appreciates the secular values which are adored in the most sophisticated spheres of society and civilization The secularists have been endeavouring to secure these values by external and material means Their endeavours meet only slight and relative success. The Svetasvatara Upanishad indicates an inner and spiritual way of securing these exquisite aesthetic values and of making them more enduring

In a passing reference which is supremely significant the body is treated as the basic instrument of spiritual realization.[187]

The social values are conspicuous in the Svetasvatara Upanishad by their absence. There is no mention of the social relations of mother, father, teacher etc in it as is found in several other Upanishads. The only social reference that is to be found in Svetasvatara is in the beginning and in the end of the text. The shantipatha chosen for it contains the basic principle of social relationship which is understood as sincere co-operation of teacher and discipline It is at the end of the text that a reference is made to the son and the disciple in the context of the imparting of instruction about the secret spiritual doctrine.[188] The spiritual reality is considered to be supremely valuable by the sages

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186 न तस्य रोगो न जरा न मृत्युः प्राप्तस्य योगाग्निमयं शरीरम् ।
श्वेताश्वतर० २-१२

187 श्वेताश्वतर० १-१४ ।

188 श्वेताश्वतर० ६-२२ ।

of the Upanishads and the spiritual doctrine is treated as secret and esoteric by them It is to be imparted only to his own son or to a devoted disciple[188] The spiritual reality is considered to be supremely valuable by the sages of the Upanishads and the spiritual doctrine is treated as secret and esoteric by them. It is to be imparted only to this own son or to a devoted disciple[189] This esoterism of Upanishads also suggests the intimacy and importance of the relation of the son and becomes a devoted disciple The duty of imparting the spiritual knowledge can form a golden cord of social relationship though this cord has not been forged with the enthusiasm which was necessary to make it the strongest and most beneficient principle of socio-spiritual life

Ethical values find a greater recognition in the Svetasvatara Upanishad. It is predominantly metaphysical but it is also pre-eminently practical. Its spiritualism is not abstract and theoretical It affirms the supreme spirit as the ultimate reality. But it also gives a tangible description of it and also prescribes a way for its realization. The supreme spirit has been perceived by the sages in yogic meditation which is also prescribed as a way for those who aspire to share the vision of reality with the sages

Tapas or penance is recognised as an important ethical discipline in the Svetasvatara as in other Upanishads[190] It paves the way of spiritual realization But meditation is supreme means of having a vision of spiritual reality[191] The course of meditation

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189 वेदान्ते परमं गुह्य पुरा कल्पे प्रचोदितम् ।
नाऽप्रशान्ताय दातव्य नापुत्रायाशिष्याय वा पुन· ॥
श्वेताश्वतर० ६-२२

190 सत्येनैन तपसा योऽनुपश्यति । श्वेताश्वतर० १-१५
यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते । मुण्डक० १-१-७

191 ध्यान-निर्मथनभ्यियासाद् देव पश्येन्निगूढवत् । श्वेताश्वतर० १-१४

is described in details[192] which have been adopted in the Bhagvadgita

The supreme being is solicited in three verses to give us wholesome intellect by virtue of which we may firmly proceed on our spiritual path[193] Ethical values are certainly conative. Some rationalistic thinkers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Kant have considered moral will to be essentially rational. It may not be completely so But the wholesome intellect undoubtedly forms the foundation of moral will and all ethical virtues Without wholesome intellect man will always be in danger of being dissuaded from the path of good and reality by temptations of passions

The ethical value of noble intellect as conceived in the Svetsvatara Upanishad is elevated to the religious level and transformed into dedication (Sarana) and devotion (bhakti) are not traceable in the ten standard Upanishads which are considered to be older than the Svetasvatara. They are to be found for the first time in the Svetasvatara among the older and standard Upanishads[194] Therefore it is regarded as a theistic Upanishad while the other ten Upanishads are characterized as absolutistic

However both dedication and devotion are of supreme importance in man's spiritual progress They are ethico-religious values which ensure for man all secular, social and ethical values and also accelerate his progress on the spiritual path. Dedication rids man of his inveterate egoism and arrogance which

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192 श्वेताश्वतर० २-८, ९, १०

193 श्वेताश्वतर० ३-४, ४-१

194 मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये । श्वेताश्वतर० ६-१८
यस्य देवे परा भक्ति । श्वेताश्वतर० ६-१६

hinders the path of spiritual progress and which is hard to dissolve by other courses of discipline. Devotion affords a supreme object of adoration and is the highest support for spiritual life which also ennobles one's social and secular life.

Peace and bliss are secular values in so far as they are desired and appreciated even by a common man with a worldly view of life Mental peace ends afflictions which poison our secular life as we commonly understand it Bliss marks the absence of all pain, suffering and sorrow. Thus both these values, though essentially and ultimately spiritual, are related with secular life by a negative reflection and reference. The supreme spiritual reality is the assurance of ultimate and enduring peace[196] in which all suffering and all sorrow disappear.[197] Peace is the end but also the means of spiritual realization and the condition of imparting spiritual instruction which cannot be given to one who is disturbed and is not transquil in temperament[198]

The supreme spirit is also the supreme judge of man's actions He judges man's acts not only from above, as transcendent reality (Karmadhyaksha) but also from within as immanent in the form of the witness self (Sakhicheta)[199] which lies hidden in the being of man and enlightens man with his judgements so far as he invites them. Karma is a secular, social and an ethical value combined in the function of life Life essentially consists in activity which is secular and social, but which, in human cir-

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195 निचाय्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति । श्वेताश्वतर० ८-११
ज्ञात्वा शिवं शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति । श्वेताश्वतर० ४-१४

196 तदा देवमविज्ञाय दुःखस्यान्तो भविष्यति । श्वेताश्वतर० ६-२०

197 एक· कृतार्थो भवते वीतशोक: । श्वेताश्वतर० २-१४

198 नाप्रशान्ताय दातव्यम् । श्वेताश्वतर० ६-२२

199 साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च । श्वेताश्वतर० ६-११

cumstances, acquires an ethical dimension also. It is good in so far as it is consonant with the characteristics of supreme spirit, i.e. in so far as it is conducive to peace, bliss, health and happiness. It is evil in so far as it is discordant with the supreme spirit. The supreme spirit is above evil and sin.[200] If man moves on the path of spirit, he can be absolved of past sin and evil, and can attain a life endowed with ethical values which will culminate in spiritual beautitude



200 ज्ञात्वा देवं सर्वपाशापहानिः
क्षीणैः क्लेशैः जन्म-मृत्यु-प्रहाणिः । श्वेताश्वतर० १-११

CHAPTER IV

# SECULAR VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

## 1. Secular Values in the Upanishads

The Upanishads are regarded as spiritual treatises of Indian Philosophy Spirit is the transcendent reality As spiritual the Upanishads and their philosophy are also believed to be transcendental i e implying a negation of secular and worldly values. The Upanishads are also understood to be ascetic in their spirit and discipline Ascetism implies a denial of secular values of life and voluntary courting of privation and suffering Spiritualism and asceticism are undoubtedly the main themes of the Upanishads and both of them do generally suggest a hostility to secular values. The idea of secularity seems to be opposite of spirituality and ascetism. Secularity suggests a sort of materialistic, hedonistic and mundane outlook of life, which is scarcely compatible with spirituality and asceticism. Food and sex are the two main secular values Food is necessary for biological existence It sustains the body. But the popular notion of spirit as incoporeal and etherial reality ignores the importance of the body Importance of body and food appears too mundane to it and consequently unworthy of any spiritualistic philosophy which is also emphatically ascetic in its discipline Sex, besides, being mundane, has come about to be associated with vulgarity not only in philosophical tradition, but also in civilized society. Though, as food sustains the body, sex is the principle of the continuation of biological existence of human race through procreation. Sex is also a phenomenon of great enjoyment to living beings But due to an association of vulgarity (perhaps on account of its privacy) with it, it is scarcely talked of in civilized intercourse and in philosophical deliberations of India or the west. There is scarce reference to it in philosophy from Plato

to Hegal and his followers. It is only in modern existentialism that the phenomenon of sex is considered worthy of serious philosophical thinking. Hence due to the general impression about philosophic soberness and also the popular belief in the spiritual and ascetic character of the Upanishads, treatment of sex is least expected in them.

Studies of Upanishadic philosophy undertaken mostly in modern times, also represent them as dominantly spiritual and ascetic gospels of India. Scarcely any reference is made in these studies to the secular values as recognised in the Upanishads. On the other hand, these studies, particularly those undertaken by western scholars, criticize the Upanishads as being extremely ascetic, painfully, pessimistic and emphatically world denying. The spirit is undoubtedly the supreme reality according to the Upanishads and some statements of some Upanishads do indicate the ascetic disposition of some sages at some moment Some statements of some Upanishads are taken as suggesting the unreality of the world and this is treated as a denial of worldly values Such statements are taken in isolation from the general temper of the Upanishads and unsympathetic interpretors have hastened to declare that the Upanishads assign no real status to earthly existence in general and particularly to secular values like food, sex, wealth etc. The scope of the treatment of these studies gives a wrong impression to the effect that these secular values are perhaps, not worthy even of mention in the Upanishads. Those who have been influenced by the popular tradition which believes the Upanishads as entirely spiritualistic and ascetic or by the scholarly (mis)representations of the Upanishads as denying the value of the world and with it the importance of social values will be surprised to find that the Upanishads have given considerable importance to secular values particularly of food and sex. The references to the texts of the Upanishads given in the body of our study will show to all open-minded persons interested in the Upanishads, that ample space and attention is devoted by the sages of the Upanishads to secu-

lar values These mundane facts of Upanishads will dispel the illusion about the illusoriness of the world and unreality of secular values created by a misguided popular tradition and in modern times by prejudiced studies of Upanishads undertaken by western scholars

The Upanishads are, in fact, keenly cognisant of the secular values of life, inspite of their spiritualism and asceticism. Not only that the secular values are mentioned at numerous places in the Upanishads, but also that these values are assigned considerable importance in the axiological view of life Instead of denying the importance of secular values, the Upanishads elevate their status by propounding a spiritualization of these values and thus present a concrete and comprehensive spiritual view of life in which these values are integrated with and elevated by the supreme spiritual value A general recognition of secular values is found in some Upanishads as a general reference to objective existence Particular secular values are also recognised in the Upanishads Food, sex, health, wealth etc are notable among them. Instead of denying the well-known secular values, the Upanishads pay attention to some rare secular values like the sweetness of speech, lustre of the face etc which are not so clearly focussed even in modern axiological treaties.

The secularity of the view of the Upanishadic sages is evident from their normal domestic way of living and is supported by their conduct and attitude in context of food, sex, wealth etc. This secularity is neither contradictory to nor inconsistent with the spirituality of reality which they so deeply explore and so devotedly seek in life On the other hand it has a higher coherence with spirituality as it is not an entirely epicurean and empirical secularity, but it is a higher axiological secularity in which secular values, generally regarded as lower in axiology, are sought to be elevated and transformed by their harmony with supreme spiritual reality which is also supreme value. This secularism of Upanishads can be regarded as cultural secularism

which secular values are elevated and transformed in their synthesis with moral and spiritual values.

The sages of the Upanishad live a normal domestic life with their wives and seem to be interested in food and wealth as a necessary means of life. They are not indulgent in sex. Nor do they covet wealth, but they support a moderate view about these both by their conduct and by their utterances Besides food, sex and wealth, they support the value of vital being, health, action, intellect etc. Recognition of the value of sleep and its assimilation to the transcendental spiritual dimension of life is a highly remarkable feature of Upanishadic secularism The Upanishadic understanding of sleep is highly valuable in life, particularly in modern life in which sleeplessness is increasing due to various causes.

A still more remarkable feature of Upanishadic secularity is its recognition of bio-aesthetic values like the aesthetic modulation of parts of the body, lustre of the face, cheerfulness and smile, sweetness of the voice and socio-aesthetic values like peace and bliss.

## 2. Value of Vital Bting

Human life is an embodied existence. Even if it is taken to be essentially spiritual, the spirit resides in the body of man and human life is the sojourn of spirit in the body. Later asceticism came to treat the body as the cage of the spirit, in which the latter is imprisoned and from which it is to be freed like a bird But their is no trace of such extreme asceticism in the Upanishads The Upanishad adore the body and its organs as sacred and pray for their health and soundness. Nowhere in the Upanishads are the body and the senses condemned as impure as it is done in later ascetism of the medieval saints In view of the sanctity of the body supported by the Upanishads the body can well be treated as the temple of the spirit It is only with and

through the body that the spirit has been explored by Indian sages and can be attained as the supreme goal of life

Body is a biological organism It is a living organism which inspired by vital spirit or prana which is the living principle of existence It functions in the form of breathing, but it is suffer than breathing which is only a functional mode of it The importance which the Upanishads give to vital being or prana as the foundation of life is an evidence of their serious and sound recognition of secular values Several Upanishads devote whole sections and even chapters to the treatment of vital being or prana Prashna, Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka are notable among them The third chapter of the Prashna Upanishad is given the title of Philosophy of Prana In this chapter the Prashna Upanishad elucidates the importance of Prana as the fundamental principle of life, by an allegorical experiment in which Prana came out of the body to show it to other senses that they are supported by it and can become lifeless and defunct without it.[1]

Prana or vital spirit is regarded as the central principle of life It is like the navel of a wheel in which all senses and modes of life are centred like spokes of a wheel[2] Prana is the supreme God and is the controller of all existence The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads also contain allegories, like the one found in the Prashna Upanishad, which confirm the superiority of Prana over senses and its supremacy as the central principle of life But as the Upanishads are spiritual, they regard supreme spirit as the ultimate support of Prana also But Prana in itself is the principle of life and supports all functions of the body and the senses. In the allegory contained in the fifth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad, when the Prana or vital spirit

1 प्रश्न उप० २-४।

2 अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम्। प्रश्न उप० २-६

proposes to leave the body all the senses felt uprooted. They appeared before Prana and prayed to it, 'you are our master, you are superior to us, pray do not leave us[3] In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Prana or vital being is distinguished as the untiring vital power, which explains the constant and continuous living of creatures[4] Both the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads prescribe that first offerings in sacrifice be given to Prana.[5] Raikva, the sage who lived in a cart, revealed to King Janashruti that Prana is the life breath of man and is the essence of life.[6] It subsists even when a man sleeps and senses are at rest. Prashna uses the figure of King for Prana. Like the King it assigns functions to senses who are its subordinates[7] Prana is nourished by food no doubt, but the food itself nourishes only when it is assimilated by Prana or vital power.[8] Yajnavalkya confirms Prana as supreme deity of existence[9] Prana is designated as Indra who is king of gods.[10] So Prana is the lord of senses. The Taittiriya Upanishad advises to worship Prana as Brahman i.e. as supreme reality. Though it is not ultimate reality, it is supreme reality of physical existence. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad recognises Prana as the truth of life,[11] though supreme spirit is, according to it, the truth of truth.[12] It means that though metaphysically supreme spirit is the supreme reality, yet prac-

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3 छान्दोग्य उप० ५-१-१२ ।

4 वृह० उप० १-३-१३ ।

5 छा० ५-१९-१ । वृह० ६-३-२ ।

6 प्राणो वाव संवर्गः । छा० ४-३-३

7 प्रश्न० उप० २-३, ३-४ ।

8 वृह० उप० १-३-१७ ।

9 वृह० उप० ३-९-१५ ।

10 इन्द्रस्त्वमसि प्राण । प्रश्न० उप० २-९, वृह० १-५-१२

11 वृह० २-१-२० ।

12 वृह० २-३-६ ।

tically Prana is the supreme physical truth of life The Mundaka Upanishad recognises the divinity of Prana. The Brihadaranyaka confirms it as the protector of life.[13] It supports, sustains and motivates all organs in an imperceptible manner. It is the underlying power of human existence Hence it is called life of life[14]

It controls not only the body but also the mind of man. The mind weakens when vitality weakens, as is exemplified in the parable of Shwetaketu who fasted for fifteen days and became incapable of understanding Vedic learning. The healing power of prana or vital spirit is recognised in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad[15] which seems to suggests the kinship of vital being with the supreme spirit as maintained in the Vaisheshika School of Indian philosophy. Prana constitutes the vigour and glory of human existence It is the basis of physical existence of man and recognition of it in the Upanishads confirms the duly secular disposition of Upanishads inspite of their ultimate spiritualism. Prana is the basic secular value and recognition of it implies the due recognition of secular values which are sustained by and in which it fulfils itself

### 3. Value of Food

Prana or vital being is the primary secular value according to the Upanishads It is the principle of living and is the fundamental basis of man's existence. It supports and sustains all organs and activities of the body. As the principle of living it is the primary condition of all cultural activities and achievements of man. It is also the condition of the spiritual philosophy, i.e. of exploration of spirit and its attainment in life. The allegories

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13 बृह० १-५-१० ।

14 बृह० १-४-७ ।

15 बृह० ५-१३-४ ।

of the Upanishads have rightly demonstrated the supremacy of Prana over all organs and senses of man

Prana or vital being depends on food. Though food is assimilated by the vital power of Prana, yet physically it is food which nourishes Prana and reinforces its vital power. Body without Prana is dead and it decomposes. But Prana withers without food. Food nourishes, sustains and supports it With all the lofty idealism and spiritualism, the Upanishads candidly recognise the basic secular value of food as the sustainer of life and thus as the primary condition of all natural and cultural activities and achievements of man As the importance of Prana or vital being is demonstrated by parables in the Upanishads, so the value of food also is elucidated by parables with crucial messages Both these parables are contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad. One of these appears at the beginning of the Upanishad in which sage Ushashti is presented as starving due to drought in the region. He begs of boiled pulses from an elephant keeper to save himself from starvation He abandons hygienic and cultural considerations in doing so He acknowledges that he accepts food from an elephant keeper because he could not survive without food

After saving his life by the begged food sage Ushashtic attended a sacrifice organised by a King where it was to be considered as to which deity was to be invoked at the sacrifice. Ushashti proposed there that this deity was Prana or vital being Later he proposed that this deity was food as all people lived by food [16] Ushashti propounds the general principle that all people live by food.[17] The other parable is found towards the end of the Chhandogya Upanishad It pertains to Shwetaketu who was asked by his father Arun to observe a fast of a fortnight for attaining spi-

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16 छान्दोग्य उप० १-११-६ ।
17 छान्दोग्य उप० १-११-६ ।

ritual enlightenment After the fast Shwetaketu became so feeble that he could not recite and understand the hymns of the Vedas. His father Aruna told him that his vital being was exhausted for want of food even as fire is extinguished without fuel He asked the son to take food and said that his vitality will revive by food just as dying fire flames up when fed by fresh fuel The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also supports the moral of the Chhandogya Upanishad and says that 'vital being withers without food'[18] The Chhandogya Upanishad also supports the view that vital being seeks food for its sustenance.[19]

Food is the support of vital being It is also the seed of the body[20] Food is regarded as Prajapati i e. the god of generation[21] Food is transformed into semen and semen is the seed of body from which creatures are born[22]

Mind also depends on food The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad holds that mind is made of food The Chhandogya Upanishad maintains that mind is material in nature and it is formed of food Mind is made of the finest element in food,[23] the cruder elements compose other parts of the body. We can find in this material view of mind the ancient traces of the later Samkhya theory and the modern psychology which understand mind as material

Food is so highly regarded in the Upanishads that it is even approximated to ultimate reality The Brihadaranyaka Upani-

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18 शुष्यति वै प्राणः ऋते अन्नात् । बृह० उप० ५-१२-१

19 छान्दोग्य उप० १-८-४ ।

20 छान्दोग्य उप० ६-८-४ ।

21 प्रश्न उप० २-७ ।

22 प्रश्न १-१४ ।

23 छान्दोग्य उप० ६-५-१ ।

shad on one occasion declares that food is Brahman or supreme reality. The Taittiriya Upanishad contains a whole treatise on food. Bhrigu at a stage of his quest for ultimate reality arrives at the belief that food is the ultimate reality.[24] Man is composed of the essence of food. Bhrigu came to realize that men are born of food and live by food.[25]

Upon this realization of Bhrigu follows the gospel of food which is so prominent in the Taittiriya Upanishad. It is the most secular part of Upanishad and dispels the views which hold the Upanishads to be other-worldly and world-denying. What is more secular and more earthly than food ? And what philosophy can be more secular than the philosophy which approximates food to ultimate reality.

The Taittiriya gospel of food contains sacred injunctions regarding food It exhorts us not to disregard food,[26] and to gather as much food as possible for ourselves and for our guests who are greatly regarded in Indian tradition.[27] The national motto of 'grow more food' adopted by the Agricultural Ministry of India is borrowed from this Taittiriya gospel of food[28]

The food has also psychological and moral effect on man's mind by its associations. If it is acquired by labour it is good, if it is acquired by exploitation it is evil One who accepts food from somebody also shares his merit or sin.[29] Here we find a basis for ethical economy which can be the basis of socialism.

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24 अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्याजानात् । तै० उ० ३-२

25 तै० उ० ३-२ ।

26 अन्नं न निन्द्यात् । तै० ३-७

अन्नं न परिचक्षीत । तै० ३-८

27 अन्नम् बहु कुर्वीत । तै० ३-९

28 अन्नम् बहु कुवर्ती । तै० ३-९

29 यो हि यस्यान्नमश्नाति स तस्याश्नाति किल्विषम् । —स्मृति

Not only food but water also is given due importance in Upanishads. The Chhandogya considers it more important than food and it is so in some respects One can live without food for some days but not without water

The recognition of the importance of food and water is an undeniable evidence of the realism and secusarism which forms the foundation of Upanishadic spiritualism.

**4. Value of Wealth**

Wealth is a material and economic value. It is necessary as a means to physical existence of man Highest spiritualism cannot deny it Body and life cannot be maintained without material means, and spiritual pursuit cannot be possible without them Even food is included in economic value. Food-grain is the basic wealth. Other articles of economic value are purchased by food-grain It was the counter and currency of commerce in villages for purchasing things in exchange of it

The recognition of the importance of food-grains for life implies the recognition of the basic value of wealth in the Upanishads. Wealth in terms of money, gold and cows also is recognised in the Upanishads. The sages of the Upanishads accept these articles of wealth as gifts from kings But wealth as an end is not supported anywhere in the Upanishads It is sought only as a means of living and not as an end for accumulation or as a means for glorification The life and view of the sages of Upanishads was characterized by simplicity and contentment in regard to economic value. They live a simple and moderate life in forest hermitages Their food was simple and their belongings were few. They did not covet wealth or desire luxuries Instead of luxury and greed their economic view bordered on austerity Wealth is only a necessity for living No external means are adequate for realization of supreme spirit. Hence all other things are to be moderate and limited. The only unlimitable thing is the spiritual delight and discipline to secure it.

This economic view of the Upanishads is evident in all the Upanishads The very first verse of the Isha Upanishad marks the moderation and contentment which characterizes the Upanishadic view of economic means and wealth. It enjoins upon man to enjoy things of life with restraint and austerity and not with a view of luxury and greed[30] Greed for wealth is forbidden candidly The Upanishads are not ascetic and puritanic. They do not prescribe renunciation nor do they condemn secular values. They recognise them duly and regard their harmony with supreme spiritual value as the supreme synthesis of life. The first sentence of the Isha Upanishad presents such synthesis as the supreme truth of life.[31]

The Katha Upanishad represents the austere tone of the Upanishads in regard to wealth and other secular values. Nachiketas was offered celestical pleasures and wealth by yama in order to dissuade him from asking difficult questions about the destiny of man. But Nachiketas declined them all He said that man cannot be satisfied with wealth[32] and sensory pleasures are exasperating and short-lived. He wanted to know the secret of life and immortality

Yajnavalkya the great sage of the Brihadaranyaka declared to his two wives that he proposed to renounce the household and to distribute his wealth between them In this context Yajnavalkya explains to his philosophical wife Maitreyi that wealth cannot lead to immortality But he does not mean to deny the value of wealth as a means of life and he confirms his regard for wealth by accepting wealth and cows from king Janaka. King Janaka asked him if he came for philosophical dis-

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30 मा गृधः कस्य स्विद् धनम् । ईश० १

31 ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् । ईश० १

32 न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यः । कठ० १-१-२७

sion or for wealth, Yajnavalkya replied that he came for both.[33] This shows the balanced outlook of the greatest spiritualist of Upanishads towards wealth i e. economic value The deprecia tion of wealth in Katha Upanishad by Nachiketas is intended to dispel the common illusion of excessive or exclusive love of wealth and to discourage lust for it, as is desired by the injunction of Isha Upanishad Weath is not condemned as illusory or unreal, but it is not conducive to spiritual realization It is external to our being Hence it is not regarded so important as food Food is a necessity Wealth is not such a necessity Love of wealth creates an illusion which conceals the spiritual truth from our vision, as the Isha Upanishad says[34]

The economic view of Isha Upanishad presents contentment as conducive to the harmony of materlal life with spiritual destiny of man on one hand and economic justice as the principle of social salvation. This economic justice is to be based on the principle of contentment and abandonment of greed to amass wealth It is through contentment that such limitation of wealth can be possible as is desired for equitable distribution and economic justice. The harmony of wealth with spiritual reality sacrifices first and makes it a gift of divine grace. It is with this harmony that material means become occasions of spiritual joy.

The Upanishadic view of economic value and wealth is highly balanced and harmonic It recognises the value of wealth as a necessary means of living But it avoids the popular evil of unwarranted condemnation of material value and of excessive asceticism. Condemnation of wealth or any other thing is also a sign of saintly egoism and abnormality, and can be suspected to be motivated by a secret craving for it. Both

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33 उभयमेव सम्राट् । वृह० उप० ४-१-१

34 हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । ईश० उप० १५

positive and negative temptations of wealth are to be overcome for a healthy spiritual discipline of life The Upanishads strike a remarkable balance between these two extremes. The recognition and acceptance of wealth by Upanishadic sages is not tainted by any lust or greed of wealth or luxury. They needed it to maintain their forest institutions and to feed their disciples. The contentment and restraint with which they dealt with wealth can ensure economic justict in society. The spiritualization of material means by integrating their use with divine spiritual joy emanating from non-dual social relations makes wealth and material means an instrument of spiritual joy for those who possess them and also for those for whom they are released through contentment. Material means can according to this Upanishadic view be transformed into instruments of social happiness and spiritual salvation.

### 5. Value of Sex

The Upanishads are generally taken to be spiritual and ascetic treatises of ancient Indian philosophy and it will sound strange to associate such a philosophy with such a mundane and vulgar phenomenon as sex as it is usually believed to be. The Upanishads are undoubtedly spiritual The philosophy of spirit or the Brahman is the dominant theme of all the Upanishads. They regard spiritual reality as also the supreme goal of human life They are ascetic also in so far as they do not prescribe a life of luxury and indulgence in sensory pleasures, though they do support an empirical life of moderation and contentment But they are not ascetic in the sense of condemnation of secular and sensory values They do not preach a mortification of flesh as was adopted by some later ascetic sects of India The Upanishads propound a philosophy of a balanced synthesis of secular and spiritual values in which the secular and sensory values find a due, though a moderate, place. And in this synthetic view of life, sex also finds its due place along with other secular and sessory values. Those who believe the Upanishads to be entirely spiritual and dominantly ascetic and

world-negating will be surprised to find that ample attention is given in the Upanishad to secular values which are dealt with in some detail in the next chapters, and that among them sex has been treated without prejudice or condemnation in many of them.

Sex is regarded, in the Upanishads as a cosmic and metaphysical principle which is cognate with the cosmological principle of creation and generation that is symbolised as Prajapati[35] This creative truth of sex has absolved sex of the vulgarity with which it has come to be associated in popular belief as well as in ascetic faith The Upanishadic sages lived a normal and simple domestic life with their wives in the forest hermitages In keeping with the original Vedic tradition they had no feeling of taboo about sex. They recognised it as a normal and natural fact of life But the Upanishads allow no license or indulgence in sex They prescribe a restrained sex life Love and fidelity are emphasised in place of luxury and license. The Upanishads exhibit a deep understanding of life and an an intimate appreciation of sexual rapture when they liken to it the rapture of spiritual realization[36] The first verse of the Isha Upanishad enjoins upon man the harmonization of sex also, among other, empirical values, with the spiritual view of existence[37]

The smaller Upanishad have little scope for treatment of sex due to their brevity and strictly spiritual motive But some of the bigger Upanishads deal with sex quite elaborately Some have made passing but significant references to sex The Isha, Kena, Mandukya are particularly too small to have any occasion or scope for mention of sex, though the principles of spi-

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35 वृहदारण्यक उपनिषद १-४-३

36 वृहदारण्यक उप० ४-३-२१ ।

37 ईशावास्यमिद सर्वम् । ईश० उप० १

ritual harmony and motivation contained in the Isha and Kena are directly applicable to sex along with other sensory functions Transcendence of cognitieve objectivity and consciousness and absorption of sleep and bliss are profound principles of Mandukya Upanishid which can be applied to sex for its deeper understanding and for its higher synthesis with spiritual reality of life The Aitareya Upanishad, though small, contains some cardinal principles of sexual culture Its bio-spiritual principle of intimate assimilation of sperm by the woman and its cultural injunction for kindly consideration for the pregnant woman are two important contributions to cultural eugenics[38] These suggestive principles of these four small Upanishads are so profound in their importance that they can make four pillars of a cultural philosophy of sex which can lead to supreme fulfilment of sex life along with spiritual salvation of human life

The Katha, Mundaka and the Shwetashwatara Upanishads are more dominantly spiritualistic in their themes The Katha is particularly critical of worldly values due to its intense interest in the final spiritual quest Nachiketa's disregard of material luxuries and sensory pleasures of paradise smacks of ascetic condemnation of them But in fact its real intention is only to highlight their limitations, and their transcience. The Mundaka and the Shwetashwatara neither condemn sex nor propose any principle for its adjustment with spiritual life as do the four smaller Upanishads The Prashna and the Taittiriya Upanishads make definite observations about adjustment of sex with cultural and spiritual life The Prashna Upanishad makes a remarkable statement about Brahmacharya, which is usually taken to mean celebacy, that cohabitation with one's wife during night is tenamount to Brahmacharya[39] Such is

38 सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति । ऐत० उप० २-१-३

39 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव यद् रात्रौ रत्या सयुज्यन्ते । प्रश्न उप० १-१३

statement challenges the extremist views of Brahmcharya and enlightens the way for moderation of sex and its synthesis with cultural and spiritual life Another statement of Prashna Upanishad reveals the kinship of sex with spirituality in regard to delight[40] It considers the sexual organ as the seat and instrument of delight The Taittiriya Upanishad also confirms this bio-spiritual hedonism of the Prashna and treats sexual organ as the seat of delight[41] It also proposes a theory of hierarchy of sensory pleasures with spiritual delight like the Isha Upanishad[42] It devotes a whole section to food but not much space to treatment of sex It sets youthful enjoyment of life as a standard of evaluation,[43] though it visualizes higher modes of delight and value The injunction of teachers to disciples, on the departure of the latter after completion of spiritual training, for continuing their progeny by marriage highlights the sane view of sages about place of sex in life[44]

The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad present copulation as a religious, sacrifice, in which woman's vagina is treated as the fiery altar[45] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also regards sexual organ as the seat of all delights[46] Life of a man is, according to it, incomplete without wife and son[47] The famous statement which aligns ecstasy of erotic embrace to spiritual trance is also found in the Brihadaran-

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40 उपस्थश्चानन्दयितव्यप् । प्रश्न उप० ४-८

41 आनन्द इत्युपस्थे । तै० उप० ३-१०

42 युवास्यात्—स एकः मानुप आनन्द । तै० उप० २-८

43 तैत्तिरीय उप० २-८ ।

44 प्रजा तन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सी । तै० उप० १-११

45 छान्दोग्य उप० ५-१-८ ।

46 सर्वे आनन्दा उपस्थे तिष्ठन्ति । वृह० उप० २-४-११

47 वृहदारण्यक उप० १-४-१६ ।

yaka[48] The last chapter of it deals with copulation in details and presents it as a religious activity.

The Upanishadic view of sex recognises it as an innocent natural phenomenon of life. It supports moderate and moral enjoyment of sex. It also suggests principles of its cultural refinement and also of its spiritual elevation and religious sanctification, whereby the animal urge can become the instrument of human fulfilment and spiritual salvation of life.

**6. Value of Action**

Action is a cardinal secular value of life. Life is active and activity constitutes the apparent essence of life. Man is active all the time and he cannot be inactive at any time, as the Gita says He is active even when he is sleeping. He is atleast breathing and blinking when he seems to be doing nothing. Activity is the nature and mode of empirical life But the transcendent spiritual reality is taken to be inactive Infact it is not inactive but it is transcendent of activity Its whole being is not exhausted in activity. It is more than activity. Activity is only one dimension of it Bliss, which is the deeper essence of reality is not one dimensional but transcendent of one dynamic dimension which appears in empirical existence Often in the Vedanta this transcendent character of spiritual reality is mistaken as inactivity and activity is regarded to be incoherent with spiritual reality. Hence it is highly important to consider the place of activity, as a secular value, in the Upanishads

Shankara and his followers are among those who regard activity to be unreal and incoherent with spiritual reality but the Upanishads also in their text condemn activity at several places and regard it inadequate as a means for spiritual realization. The

48 यथा प्रियया जायया सम्परिष्वक्तो ।
न किं चिद् वाह्य वेत्ति नान्तरम् ।। वृह० उप० ।

Mundaka Upanishad uses the metaphor of unsteady boats for ritual activity and considers it inadequate as a means for spiritual realization.[49] One cannot cross the ocean of life by them They cannot bear the storms of the ocean and are likely to drown in the ocean of life. Spiritual attainment is a kind of immediate realization It is not like the result of an active process Hence activity is regarded to be technically inadequate for it[50] Spiritual attainment is an eternal experience. Eternity cannot be conceived as an end of a passing process of time[51] Activity is a temporal process Time and activity are incoherent with spiritual attainment As an eternal experience, it cannot be attain through the temporal process of activity Spiritual realization is attainment of freedom, which is th essence of spirit while process of time and activity involves determination as a condition of sequence Hence also activity is inconsistent with spiritual attainment

It is for the reason of these logical and technical considerations that Shankara also regards activity as unreal and inconsistent with spiritual attainment He is so adamant about this inconsistency, that he has vehemently emphasised in his commentary of the Bhagwadgita which is generally believed to be a gospel of Karmayoga

But there are some crucial statements of the Upanishad which support the value of actions in the Vedanta Two such statements are notable One is to be found in the Isha Upanishad which enjoins upon man to live an active life for a hundred years[52] The other is also to be found in the Isha Upanishad which asserts in

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49 प्लवा ह्येते अदृढाः । मुण्डक उप० १-२-७

50 नास्त्यकृत. कृतेन । मुण्डक उप० १-२-१२

51 न ह्य ध्रुवैः प्राप्यते तद् ध्रुवम् । कठ० १-२-१०

52 कुर्व्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शतं समा । ईश० उप० २

one breath, with the risk of an apparent contradiction, that spiritual reality is both active and inactive.[53] It is to be noted that this statement mentions first that the spiritual reality is active. It is a crucial question of the Upanishadic philosophy how condemnation of activity found in them is to be reconciled with the two statements noted immediately above.

Shankara has reconciled the injunction to activity found in the Isha Upanishad by relegating it to the realm of unreality and by limiting its application to ignorant persons who are involved in the illusion of unreality.[54] Shankara's modification of the meaning of the Upanishadic statement is motivated by technical and logical considerations indicated above. But there is no such suggestion in the text of the Upanishad itself The statement seems to be a simple and unqualified injunction to activity, though it is intended to be an activity consonant with spiritual attitude which is defined earlier in verse one of the Isha Upanishad. There is no such distinction intendtd in the text in the status of the two verses as is assumed by Shankara to be there.

The whole confusion has resulted from a misunderstanding about the transcendent dimension of spirituality and from mistaking it to imply inactivity or staticness Staticness is an empirical and intellectual illusion. The above misunderstanding has followed from an epistemological bias of post-Upanishadic Vedanta in which the blissful essence of reality was ignored and the character of self as an epistemological subject of experience which remains unchanged and identical with itself, like Transcendental Ego of Kant, in the whole course of cognitive experience. The opposition with Budhistic denial of an identical subject self, in which later Vedanta involved itself, is mainly responsible for this confusion The affirmation of subjective identity

53 तदेजति तन्नैजति । ईश० उप० ५

54 शांकर भाष्य । ईश० उप० २

of self is not ultimately important for the Vedanta either in the epistemological or in the ethical context Even epistemological cognition of passing objective phenomena is directed and inspired not by individual identity of subject self but by non-dualistic spirit in which more than one person enjoy their existence The ethical action is moral only in so far as it is inspired by this non-dualistic spirit which expresses in altruism rather than in individual ethical will It is in this spiritualization of will and action that activity is reconciled with transcendent reality This is the secret of the Karmayoga of Bhagwadgita, and also of the injunction to active life contained in the second verse of Isha Upanishad Such a synthesis of activity with transcendent spiritual reality is confirmed to be the truth of the whole nature of reality in the Kena Upanishad which affirms dynamic and transcendent nature of reality as its complementary dimensions

This synthesis of activity with transcendent spiritual reality can be better and more intimately understood in the light of energetic exuberance of bliss Activity or dynamics is an expression of this exuberant blissful being in one dimension The spiritual motivation of activity can be related to the Divine will which is affirmed both in the Gita and the Upanishads The God of Gita is presented as active and the supreme being is motivated by will to effect creation of the universe[55] Spiritual divine unites spontaneous dynamics and not deliberated will like human will The spiritual motivation of common and normal sensory activiy of man, which is confirmed in the Kena and Katha Upanishads[56] also, affords an evidence for reconciliation of activity with spiritual reality It is ritual and selfish action which is unspiritual as it is dualistic Altruistic action motivated by spontaneous spiritual will is deeply spiritual in its inspiration and character

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55 स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा इति । ऐतरेय० उप० १-१-१

56 श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रम् । केन० उप० १-१

इतरेण तु जीवन्ति । कठ० उप० २-२-५

Such action is character of a realized man and of God also. Such action is not merely an empirical fact, but is consonant with spiritual reality which transcendent bliss dominates but of which activity also in an integral dimension

## 7. Value of Intellect

Intellect is an important value of life. Though life is active, it is directed by intellect Intellect is the light of judgment which regulates the activities of life and illumines the path of activities But intellect is dualistic. It functions in the form of proposition which is composed of a subject and an object. The proposition also implies an individual who advances the proposition as his judgment All these implications of the function of intellect involve duality between the entities which are distinctly recognised in intellectual action Duality is an estrangement of entities which are also sought to be related in a judgment In this respect intellect is opposed to be spiritual reality which is non-dualistic in nature and inspires affiliation in life. Understood in its own character, intellect is obstructive in rather than conducive to spiritual attainment. Samkhya understands it as material and an evolute of primordeal Prakriti. Whether it reflects or possesses consciousness, it is dualistic due to consciousness also Its main function is to distinguish and discriminate, which involves dualism. Both due to its materiality and dualisticness it is opposed to spirit and spiritual attainment. Intellect instigates argument and reasoning, which also imply duality. It requires two persons to argue and argument and reasoning is generally a relation of antagonism. Agreement and harmony is rare in reasoning Intellect and argument are more inclined to differ and dispute

The antagonism of intellect with integrating and affiliative spiritual reality is evident to the philosophers of the Vedanta from the very beginning The Upanishads for spiritual attainment. The Katha Upanishad candidly denies the adequacy of argument and intellect loaded with learning for attaining spiritual

understanding and enlightenment.[57] The Brahma Sutra also confirms this view of the Upanishads about reasoning and also explains the reason of the above limitation of reasoning[58] It exposes the unfoundedness of reason as it can be disputed by alternative argument[59] More learned and more intellectual persons can dispute and unfound any argument, as Bhartrihari says. There is no end to reasoning and we all have experience of endless and inconclusive argumentations Intellect and reasonong are alienating and thus opposed to affiliating spiritual reality

Later Vedanta got involved in dispute and argumentation with rival systems of Buddhism, Samkhya etc, but the Upanishad are clearly aware of limitations of reason. Hence they have not adopted the method of reason for spiritual inquiry The sages contemplate about reality but they do not argue about it The Upanishadic method of inquiry and instruction is more suggestive than argumentative Disciples are directed to meditate and observe penance and to realize the spiritual reality for themselves It is a mystical rather than a logical method. It is only in the later Vedanta that excessive reasoning developed inspite of the original Vedantic faith in immediate experience of reality Brahman is inquired into and investigated in the Brahma Sutras The Upanishad also originally recognised, the place of learning and contemplation in the Vedantic discipline But they did not regard intellectual argumentation as of much value All reasoning and argumentation is done through thought and language is conceptual, hence intellectual The spiritual reality is said to be beyond mind, thought and speech[60] Mind, thought and speech return from its way without reaching it Narad lamented that he could

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57 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया ।   कठ० उप० १-१-९

58 तर्काप्रतिष्ठानात् ।   ब्रह्मसूत्र

59 अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैरन्यथैवोपपद्यते ।   भर्तृहरि

60 अवाङ्मनसगोचरम् ।

not reach the spiritual reality though he had learnt all the scriptures and sciences.[61]

Intellect is conscious and cognitive. Cognitively it is related to an object and its consciousness is reflected in further cognition of cognition which is called 'anuvyavasaya' in Indian philosophy. Cognitive consciousness is dualistic as it involves a distinction between subject and object. In 'anunvyavasaya' with its reflective consciousness the subjective knowledge is further bifurcated by a keener isolation of subjective fact of consciousness from the complex of cognition. Thus it is further deepening of the dualism involved in the character of cognitive consciousness. This confirms all the more strongly the dualistic character of intellect which is opposed to the integral character of spiritual reality. This antagonism of intellectual consciousness with integral spiritual reality is confirmed in the paradoxical statement of the Kena Upanishad in which it is asserted that 'one who knows the spirit does not know it and one who does not know it verity knows it.[62] The meaning is that the spirit cannot be known in cognitive consciousness as an object, but it can be realized in integral experience. This spiritual realization is an intelligent experience but it is not fraught with the duality of cognitive consciousness. It is blissful consciousness which is integral and immediate and can therefore be better described as super-conscious experience

But with all this skepticism about the power of intellect and reason, the Upanishad give due importance to them. They only insist that intellect and reason are not capable of apprehending the integral reality of spirit. But these can be useful to a great extent in spiritual discipline. Common and normal life also cannot be possible without intellect, as it cannot be possible without

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61 छान्दोग्य उप० ७-१-३ ।

62 अविज्ञातम् विजानताम् । विज्ञातमविजानताम् । केन० उप० २-३

intellect, as it cannot be possible without functioning of senses. As the senses are ultimately inspired by spirit in view of the Kena Upanishad, so the intellect also is inspired more by spirit. The senses are below ego and function selfishly. But the intellect is above ego as it is general and impersonal Though dualistic and in so far opposed to spirit, intellect is the light of the spirit shining in the being of man an illuminating his path of life and salvation With all its duality and antagonism to spirit it is the only light available to man It may not lead man all the way to the spiritual goal of life, but it can lead him a long way, even upto the threshold of the realm of spirit. It becomes detrimental to spiritual discipline only if it suffers from a downward tendency and fraternizes with egoism and arrogance. If imbued with spiritual humility, it is the highest light of man. Therefore it is resorted to in the earlier stages of spiritual discipline concerned with learning of scriptures from teachers and contemplation on the truth thus learnt Too much indulgence in the intricacies of reason is detrimental to spiritual interest of life. But a moderate use of intellect can afford initial and useful enlightenment even about spiritual and integral truths Shankara also has approved the utility of reason and exhorted us to give due regard to it[63] Intellect is sattvic in character and is above ego, mind and senses Thus it can help greatly to discipline, restrain and regulate senses and mind as required for spiritual discipline Though the intellect comes to rest in spiritual realization, as the Katha Upanishad says[64], yet it can be the most reliable guide on the spiritual path of life. The Katha Upanishad assigns to intellect the role of the chariot driver who can drive the chariot of body according to the intentions of the spirit who inhabits it as the hero, and control the senses alogned to steeds.[65]

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63 तर्कमप्यादर्तव्यम् ।   शांकर भाष्य

64 वुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति ।   कठ० उप० २-३-१०

65 इन्द्रियाणि हयान्याहु ।   कठ० उप० १-३-८, ५

The Shwetashwatara Upanishad suggests that the intellect purified by spiritual discipline can be helpful in the vision of spiritual reality.[66] For this as the Gita, advises the intellect is to be surrendered to the spirit[67] Such chastened intellect can be serviceable in spiritual discipline and salvation of man.

## 8. Value of sleep

Sleep is a most important and most remarkable value of human and animal life It is a highly mysterious and significant phenomenon of biological existence All living creatures need and have it How does it come to them is difficult to explore in all its details Some physiological and chemical factors involved in sleep have been discovered by scientific experimentations. But the entire secret of sleep is perhaps not yet known to us Some psychological, spiritual and mystical aspects of sleep seem to be inaccessible It is largely a dark phenomenon of life and very little is visible in its darkness. The darkness is deeper in regard to its deeper secrets Hence they are less accessible.

Sleep is understood as a negative state of existence because all external activity is suspended in it. Consciousness of the waking state is also suspended, suppressed or superceded in it. Man lies in it almost in an inactive and unconscious state. Through suspension of activity and consciousness, sleep is understood to restore the energies of man spent during waking state and refresh man for new activity This is true because one who does not find time to sleep for a night or two feels exhausted and tired. Negatively little energy is spent during sleep due to suspension of activity and positively new energy is generated through the digestive functions of abdomen The freshness and exuberance felt after sleep is the fruit of this double benefit of sleep

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66 द्रश्यते सूक्ष्मया बुद्धया विशुद्धया ।

67 मयि बुद्धि निवेशय । गीता २-८

Sleep is very necessary for maintaining the tempo of energy and highly important for efficient conduct of waking life Axiological studies so rarely recognise the value of this important phenomenon of life The peace and pleasure of sleep is fully appreciated by common man He understands its value more deeply when it is denied to him or his kins for reason of some ailment But philosophers do not seem to appreciate its value sufficiently In their acceleration of consciousness in philosophic thinking they have forgotten the value of this pleasant phenomenon which naturally bestows upon us a temporary suspension of consciousness It is remarkable for the sages of the Upanishads that they recognised the value of sleep in those ancient times and also explored its secret deeply The Upanishadic metaphysics of sleep is marvellous for its meaning and significance A most remarkable feature of Upanishadic understanding of sleep is the discovery of the transcendent character of sleep and of the transcendent and spiritual link between waking state and transcendent trance in sleep The Upanishads do not take sleep as a mere biological and bodily phenomenon of rest but as a schema of spirituality The Upanishadic emphasis on sleep does not imply an oblivation or neglect of the importance of waking life and activity. The Upanishads recognise the due importance of action and have emphasised it as it is evident from the injunction to live an active life for a hundred years in the Isha Upanishad[68] Though the Upanishads emphasise the philosophic limitations of acts, yet they try to harmonise them with transcendent spiritual reality. Karmayoga is the name given to this synthesis by Gita But the Isha Upanishad has propounded it in substance much earlier

The Upanishadic Vedanta does not accept action in its natural form and with its one-dimentional character. Such action is determinate and binding It identifies man's being with the natural course of universe and reduces man to an object passing pas-

68 कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शत समा । ईश उप० २

sively through this course Such identification is nihilation of the specific human being of man. Man is not an object He is an ethical, cultural and spiritual being. As an ethical being he controls his action by will. This regulative character of man's being constitutes a dimension of existence which is not found in objects and animals. Both of them are governed by nature Culture is a wider and richer form of this volitional aspect of man's life. The secret of both morality and culture lies in the spiritual character of man Spirit is the transcendent dimension of man's being. It transcends duration and determination and transports man to a realm of freedom, creativity and delight. Transcendence of duration bestows peace which flowers in delight Spirit is the real nature and true being of man. It is characterized by peace and delight. Sleep is a natural and easy approximation of it It is a marvellous discovery of the Upanishadic sages that spirit is the true being of man and that man realizes this true being at least provisionally every day in sleep[69] The secret of this idea is contained in the etymology of the word 'swapiti', and it indicates that it is incorporated in the cultural complex of India reflected in language Still it is to the credit of Upanishadic sages that they have revealed this spiritual secret of sleep and explained its significance in details

The most remarkable feature of Upanishadic understanding of sleep is the idea of dreamless sleep Sleep is generally disturbed by dreams But dreams usually occur at the beginning and end of the sleep It is deeper and dreamless in the middle This is the core of sleep It is deeper and dreamless in the middle This is the core of sleep It is free from any dream or idea and approximates to pure being Its freedom from an ideal object brings it extremely close to transcendent spirit as conceived in the Upanishads In dreamless sleep man reaches the door of spiritual being every day, without effort and without consciousness, but he

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69 छान्दोग्य उप० ६, ८, २

returns from it But he experiences a glimpse of spiritual reality, which should and can be stabilized in normal and waking life. It is the peaceful, blissful, and transcendent core of being, which can be concurrent with normal activity of life, sleep restores energies and refreshes a man Stabilization of that transcendent state in life will ensure greater energies and greater freshness as a constant course of life Dreamless sltep is a schema of spiritual being which reinforces life with energy and freshness on one hand and on other hand it affords glimpses of man's real being and destiny, in which lies the salvation of his life Both as an empirical and spiritual phenomenon sleep is immensely valuable in life It is a secular value with intrinsic spiritual significance like sex It is particularly important in modern times when so many external and internal factors are robbing man of the bliss of sleep both in regard to its quantity and quality

## 9. Bio-aesthetic Values

The Upanishad are believed to be spiritual scriptures and they are undoubtedly so Treatment of spirit dominates their texts But they are not so exclusively spiritual as to ignore the secular and worldly values It is a distorted understanding of Upanishads to take them as propounding a world-negating philosophy. Our exposition of secular values as they are recognised in the Upanishad will convince both admirers and critics of Upanishad how much space and importance is given by them to secular values What is surprising is that rather than being oblivious of secular values or condemning them, the Upanishads have duly emphasised basic secular values like food, sex etc what is still more surprising is that they have emphasized, though only on rare occasions, some such secular values as are considered to be highly important by people with a deep sense of life, but which are not duly considered in axiological philosophies Sleep without dreams is one such value Sleep is not merely suspension of activity and physical rest It conceals profound and deep secret of life

A most remarkable feature of these ancient spiritual scriptures is the recognition of bio-aesthetic values which are rarely considered in axiological treatises Among these aesthetic excellence of physical structure of the body, efficiency of sense organs, lustre of the body and face, and sweetness of voice are specially appreciated in the Upanishads The Upanishadic sages pray for a healthy and a well-modulated body. Besides aesthetic formation of the body, physical strength and efficiency of senses also are considered to be important physical strength is regarded as the necessary condition of self-realization One who lacks in physical strength expect to realize the spirit,[70] according to the Mundaka Upanishad Strong and aesthetic formation of parts of the body is aspired by sages They pray for it[71] Efficiency of senses is also prayed for[72] Senses are admittedly secular in their evident form, though the Upanishad regard the spirit to be the original power and inspiration behind them They are instruments by which man deals with his external environment Prayers for efficiency of sense organs are an evidence of the Upanishadic regard for secular values The senses are extrovert and in so far unspiritual, but they are valuable for life, though they are to be spiritualized. Ears and eyes are main and more developed among sense organs The sages in the Prashna Upanishad pray for excellent power of hearing which was important in a plain country like India[73] They pray for efficiency of eyes also Other cognitive senses are not deemed to be so important.

But it is notable that sweetness of voice is prayed for Voice is the most spiritual of all sensory functions. It relates man with

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70 नायमात्मा वल हीनेन लभ्य. । मु० उप०

71 स्थिरै रङ्गै । शान्तिपाठ—प्रश्नोपनिषद्

72 आप्यायन्तु ममांगानि इन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि । शान्ति पाठ केन उप०

73 कर्णाभ्यां भूरि विश्रवम् त० उप० १-४

his fellow beings most intimately Harsh voice is displeasing to others Sweet voice is pleasing and affiliating Everybody likes it Besides physical and organic reasons there is also a spiritual basis of sweet voice Voice becomes harsh by quarrelling. It retains its natural sweetness by loving and affectionate disposition The Upanishads atleast affirms the importance of sweet voice and suggest the spiritual secret of it which is practically useful for every one who loves to have a sweet voice

The lustre of body and face, and even the sweet fragrance of the body, besides cheerfulness of face and smile are bio-aesthetic values which are highly appreciated in civilized society for which people use costly cosmetics Recognition of these values by the ascetic sages of Upanishads is remarkable and surprising Though they do not show any taste for artistic beauty, they keenly appreciate the importance of these aesthetic excellences which enhance the aesthetic status of body and personality. Sweet voice and sweet fragrance of the body are specially notable among them The sage in the Taittiriya Upanishad prays for sweet voice[74] and the Shwetashwatara Upanishad marks sweet fragrance of the body as a sign of initial achievements of yoga[75] Civilized people use cosmetics for overcoming bad odours of body and for giving sweet fragrance to it These aristocratic cosmetics are very costly The yoga of the Upanishads affords an organic and internal fragrance to the body which is natural and not artificial and external. The secret of the sweetness of the voice has not been explained in the Upanishad but it can easily be understood as being spiritual Human voice becomes harsh by conflict and quarrel, because in these antagonism is stressed besides the tone of the voice Antagonism is unspiritual as spirit is affiliating A disposition of affection and affiliation cultivates sweet voice It can be experimentally ascertained. The aesthetic

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74 जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा ! तै० उप० १-४

75 गन्ध शुभ । श्वे० उप० २-१३

importance of sweet voice as underlined in the Taittiriya Upanishad is quite consonant with the spiritualism of the Upanishads.

Lustre of the body and face and cheerfulness of facial disposition adorned with a smile are aesthetic excellences of the body and personality which are rare and highly covetable. Rich and happy people often have them. But they are rarer in common people because they are oppressed with conflicts in life which rob them of spiritual affections and consequently of these aesthetic excellences of the personality. Spirit is the supreme energy and spiritual affiliation energises the body from within and the illumination of its energy shines as lustre of the face. Smile is specifically spiritual Hence children smile more and smile fades with age. The evidence of the spirituality of smile is found in the Taittiriya Upanishad in which Varuna the father of Bhrigu declared the latter as on one who has realized the spirit on the basis of cheer and smile of his face, which he acquired in the course of his successful penance for spiritual realization[76] This Upanishadic aesthetics of personality is highly valuable for civilized society of all times.

**10. Negative Values**

Negative values are those values which are not positively desirable but which arouse a negative disposition to avoid or overcome them They art not, in fact, values but anti-values i e marked with a character which is antagonistic to values. The Upanishads recognise several positive secular values like food, sex, wealth etc and assign due importance to them in human life The Upanishads are not Epicurean but spiritual. They do not prescribe indulgence in secular values but they do accept a restrained and regulated enjoyment of these secular values. They also recommend a spiritualization of secular values in order to transform them into effective instruments of spiritual salvation These secular values are consi-

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76 ब्रह्मविदेव सोम्य भासि । छा० ४-९-२

dered in many of the Upanishads Some of them like food and sex have been treated elaborately. An account of these positive secular values is given in about ten chapters in this treatise and a brief introductory account of them is given in this prefatory chapter

Negative secular values are those aspects of life which are characterised by a deprival of desirable positive counterparts and by undesirable experience or apprehension which nihilates life relatively or absolutely Suffering, fear and death are notable among these negative secular values These are secular because they concern with the physical and mental experience and existence of man. So far as the spirit is concerned these do not affect it as it is transcendent of them These are negative as these nihilate the physical existence of man either relatively or absolutely. Suffering and fear do it relativtly. Death does it absolutely. Pain is the general character of them Fear is also not pleasant It is painful The pain of fear is mental. Fear is mental nihilation of existence Death is total nihilation of man's existence Its idea or apprehension is painful and fearful It is inevitable and man is always occupied with some mental or practical engagement in order to avoid the idea of death and to belie it as far as possible at least in his illusory make-believe.

Suffering is a common fact of life Every person observes and experiences it in life But post-upanishadic Indian philosophy is remarkable for recognising it so emphatically as to make it the crux of thought Buddha is responsible for having highlighted so brilliantly the place of suffering in thought and life. Buddha's extraordinarily protected life and consequent supersensitiveness is the reason for his making suffering the pivot of his philosophy Later schools of Indian philosophy took the lead from the influence of Buddhism But there is not such emphasis on suffering in pre-Buddhistic Upanishadic thought Death is more severely recognised in the Upanishads than common suffering More than death the Upanishads are occupied with the at-

tainment of immortality. The Upanishads are not pessimistic as they are often alleged to be They do not emphasise suffering. Nor do they affirm a dispairing destiny. On the other hand they seek a most optimistic way of immortality and eternal happiness. Pain and suffering is experienced in dualistic consciousness. It can be overcome and transcended in non-dualistic spiritual super-conscious which is characterised by bliss; and cannot be overcome in any other way.[77]

Fear is a most significant negative value and it is remarkable for such ancient scriptures as the Upanishads to present a revealing analysis of it The Upanishads are more positive and optimistic Therefore they consider happiness, fearlessness and immortality more than suffering, fear and death But a singular reference found in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is remarkable for the subtlety and depth with Prajapati, the original creator of the world felt afraid as he was alone in the absence of creation Thus reports the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.[78] He felt afraid and loneliness and did not enjoy alone. So he created the world of copular duality and enjoyed through various copular species[79] Now the Upanishad inquires as to why did Prajapati feel afraid when he was alone.[80] Fear is aroused by the other person when he is suspected to be dangerous There was no other person to be afraid of for Prajapati before creation as no other person existed.

This parable of Prajapati reveals the secret of fear. Fear is positively the reaction of lack of non-dualistic spiritual fulfil-

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77 श्वेताश्वतर । वृह० ६-२०

78 सोऽबिभेत्तस्मादेकाकी विभेति । वृह० उप० १-४-२

79 बृह० उप० १-४-३

80 कस्मान्नु बिभेमि । द्वितीयाद्वै भय भवति । वृह० उप० १-३-२

ment in bliss and positively a challenge to one's existence The idea of antagonism with the other person poses such a challenge and also a lack of non-dualistic spiritual fulfilment in Bliss Hence it arouses fear. Either of the two situations noted above can arouse fear. Non-dualistic spiritual fulfilment leads to attainment of fearlessness. Hence Janaka is said to have attained a state of fearlessness[81] Spiritual realization is affirmed to be accompanied with fearlessness in several statements of the Upanishads The Upanishadic view of fear can be experimentally verified by comparing situations of varying degrees of lack of presence of affiliating spiritual non-duality

Death is the supreme suffering of life It is the greatest nihilator of man's existence. Every man dies and every man is aware of it in advance by his observation. As life advances in age and consciousness every man develops deeper fear of death But no one can live under shadow of death. Hence everybody seeks to avoid the idea of death by keeping himself occupied by engagements of life, as R L Stevenson has depicted in his famous essay on 'Aes Triplex'

Death is the inevitable end of physical body of man. Body is deteriorating and decaying by nature Death is an evident and inevitable fact of life which can neither be improved nor avoided by any enlightenment. Decay is the nature of composite bodies and death is the inevitable end of this process of decomposition The Upanishads discover the root cause of it in hunger[82] Apparently hunger maintains the body by assimilating food. But in fact it is this need of nourishment which is the cause of death Body decays and dies when it becomes too feeble to assimilate food That is normal death. It can be precipitated by some disease or defect in organism. Man has created a paradise of imagination in which man keep young for long But it is not immortality but only prolonged youthful existence which ends

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81 अभयं वै जनक प्राप्तोऽसि । बृह० उप० ४-२-४

82 अशनाया हि मृत्यु. । बृह० उप० १-२-१

in deluge. The Upanishads discover the secret of immortality in non-dualistic spiritual experience. Death is the consequence of course of time which gnaws human existence. Spirit is above time and is not affected by its course of mutation Attainment of spiritual non-dualistic experience which is transcendent of time secures immortality of man. It may not be eternal continuation of bodily existence, but it is undoubtedly an unchallengeable experience of immortality. It is unchallengeable by death and interminable by time. Numerous references to this immortal experience are found in the Upanishads[83]

The Upanishads view of suffering, fear and death is verifiable in degree in actual life in terms of degrees of spiritual non-duality and is practically profitable in life.



83 श्वे० उप० १-६, ४-११ से १४, ३-१, ६-१२, ६-१५, ६-३०
छां-उप० ७-१-३, ७-२६-२, १-३-५,
बृह० उप० ४-४-७, ४-४-८, ४-४-२५

CHAPTER V

# BODILY VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

## 1. Introductory

Body is the basis of secular existence of man It is also the basis of the spiritual existence of man, which is so much emphasised in the Upanishad and the discovery of which constitutes the most remarkable contribution to human knowledge and culture The knowledge of spirit is regarded as the highest knowledge Hence it is called Vedanta i e the end of knowledge (veda + anta) As embodying this highest spiritual knowledge the Upanishads also are called the Vedanta The Vedanta is the knowledge of the supreme spirit which is also the supreme reality. The realization of this supreme reality in life is the supreme salvation of man

But the Upanishadic discovery of supreme spirit as supreme reality has been possible only in the bodily existence of man. The supreme spirit may, in its ultimate nature, be disembodied in principle even in its reálization in life in the sense that it is not governed by laws of body, but so far as its discovery and its realization in human life is concerned, it is possible only in the bodily existence of man The inetlligence which could discover it and device means of its realization also resides in the body i e in the brain of man The means of realization of spirit can be observed and availed of only through the assistance of body, senses and mind Approaching the teacher, sitting near him, listening to his instructions etc can be possible only with the help of the body and without it

The spirit which is the supreme reality may pervade the entire existence but for purposes of understanding and realization it is taken to reside in the body of man This fact is recognised in the appellations of spirit as 'dehi' i e one who resides in the body and is the governing master of it The governance

of the body by the spirit also implies the reality and importance of the body, though it may be secondary as an instrument of spirit. If the spirit is the master of the body, the body could more correctly be called 'atmic' or spiritual as belonging to atman or spirit, instead of calling the spirit as one residing in the body. The spirit is called 'dehi' as one residing in the body not only to signify the evident empirical fact of body being the basis of spirit but it also suggests the importance of the body as the vehicle and instrument of spirit. This linguistic lineage of bodily designations of spirit also indicates that the importance of body in relation to the spirit is incorporated in the tradition of the language also which secretly but spontaneously bears in its words the deepest truths of the life of a people

Thus body which is the cardinal basis of all secular values is also the abode of the spirit and ground of its discovery and an indispensable instrument of its realization in life This co-ordination of human existence with spiritual reality has also been recognised in the Upanishadic literature. The Aitareya Aranyaka holds that the spirit has more fully expressed itself in the existence of man.[1] The ancient designation of the spirit as 'purusha' also signifies the importance of human existence in the context of spirit. Bodily existence may be transient but it is an occasion for the realization of eternal spiritual reality. Whether the Darwinian theory of evolution is true or not, there could be no discovery of the spirit nor any disposition towards its realization before the emergence of man in a human body and with a human mind. There is no record of any such quest even during the primitive times of human existence. It is only with the emergence of higher intelligence in man that discovery of spirit has been possible. It is only with the moral de-

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1 पुरुषेत्वाविस्तरदात्मा ।

velopment of man that realization of spiritual reality could be contemplated.

All these cultural and spiritual possibilities of human life are connected with and conditioned by the bodily basis of human existence. The human body was condemned in later asceticism as the seat of sufferings and as abode of ailments, but there is no indication of such condemnation of body in the Upanishads The Upanishads recognise the essentiality of bodily existence and the need of food for it[2] They do not support mortification of flesh and no Upanishadic sage is reported to have advised or undertaken it On the other hand health, vigour and vital being are admired to the extent it is desirable A healthy wealthy and youthful person has been deemed as the standard of evaluation of human happiness[3] The senses have been treated as instruments of wearing out the vitality of man,[4] but they are considered to be motivated by the spirit[5] and an integration of their working with the spirit is presented as the highest synthesis of human existence.[6]

The Kena Upanishad regards it as a great truth of life, if one realizes the spirit in life time If one fails to do it, it is a great calamity[7] It is through these suggestions of the Upanishads that the moderate spiritualists of later times like Tulsidas came to regard human birth and human existence as a rare opportu-

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2 नायमात्मा वलहीनेन लभ्य । मु० उप० ३-२-४

3 युवास्यात्साधुयुवाध्यायक. ग्राशिष्ठो द्रढिष्ठो वलिष्ठ· । तै० उप० २, ८

4 सर्वेन्द्रियाणा जरयन्ति तेज । क० उप० १-१-२६

5 केन उपनिपद् । खण्ड १ मन्त्र १-८

6 ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् । ईश० १

7 इह चेदवेदीथ सत्यमस्ति
न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टि । केन उप २, ५

nity and a supreme occasion for man for working for his salvation.[8]

## 2. Body as the abode of spirit

Though human existence is short lived and transitory[9] and though the body is reduced to dust after death,[10] yet the body is treated as an abode with eleven doors in which the spirit resides.[11] The senses are like the doors as they open towards the outer world and make contact with it possible. Mind is the eleventh sense, besides the ten which are well-known. It was only in later ascetism that this bodily abode of the spirit was considered as a cage (i.e. a prison) for the spirit compared to a bird imprisoned in it In the Upanishads there is no indication of this antagonistic relation of the body and the spirit. On the other hand bodily existence was regarded as an opportunity for spiritual realization. The body is not the prison of the soul but a habitat for it, or a temple in which the soul can work out its salvation by worship and meditation.

## 3. Body as the embodiment of spirit

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad describes two modes of Brahman or the ultimate reality. One is called the embodied and the other is called unembodied. The former is mortal and the

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8 बड़े भाग मानुष तनु पावा।
सुर दुर्लभ सब ग्रन्थन्हि गावा॥
साधन धाम मोक्ष कर द्वारा।
पाइ न जेइ परलोक सँवारा॥
रामचरित मानस—उत्तर काण्ड दोहा ४२

9 जीवितमल्पमेव। कठ० उप० १-१-२६

10 भस्मान्तं शरीरम्। ईश उप० १७

11 पुरमेकादश द्वारम्। कठ० उप० २-२-१
नव द्वारे पुरे देही। श्वे० उप ३-१८

later is immortal.[12] Body is treated as the very embodiment of the spirit Though it is mortal, it is not an utter illusion or an absolute unreality. It is a mortal frame made of five elements in which the spirit resides and endeavours to realize itself. The five elements also are createl by the supreme spirit out of its own being and by its own will Thus as modern physics considers the whole universe made of electronic energy, so the Vedantic metaphysics regards the entire existence as created by the supreme spirit out of its own being

Vital spirit is the truth of the bodily existence[13] It sustains and supports it But sight is treated to be the essence of it[14] Sight is the most miraculous mode of divine creation. Man establishes his commerce with the world and with society mainly through sight When sight is lost the world seems to be lost Divine spirit seems to peep through the eyes, particularly of innocent children, animals like cows and deer, and other peaceful persons, though often the devil designed by man himself also takes possession of this divine door to heaven

### 4. Value of physical strength

Body is sustained by vital power which is called 'prana' in the Upanishads and dealt with elaborately in many of them. Vitality is the essence of living The identity of vitality and life explains the etymological tautology of the two terms Vitality expresses in the form of physical power and strength of the body, it is the vital power that sustains the body. But the popular idea of physical strength inclines more towards normal or even optimum strength and power. It is only in the optimum state of vitality that a person is treated as strong or

12 द्वावेव ब्राह्मण रूपे मूर्त्तं चैवामूर्त्तं च मर्त्यं चामृतं च ।
बृह० उप० २-३-१

13 प्राण एव सत्यम् । बृह० उप० २-३-६

14 यच्चक्षु सतो ह्येष रस । बृह० उप० २-२-४

powerful Optimum physical power enables one to work excellently which is a necessary condition of spiritual salvation.

Such an ascetic Upanishad as the Mundaka declares boldly that the spirit cannot be realized by one who lacks physical strength,[15] Shankaracharya has interpreted 'power' in this context as 'power of moral and spiritual discipline' but there seems to be no justification in the text for such an extension of meaning. It is true that power can be of several kinds. Intellectual and moral powers also can be included in it. But physical power is the most common and popular form of it Though, as the Chhandogya Upanishad indicates, physical power also is invigorated by mental inspiration,[17] the same Upanishad also regards physical power as superior to intelligence.[18] Intelligence and mind also decline when physical power is feeble.

Physical strength and power are necessary condition of spiritual salvation. Moral and altruistic action makes a positive contribution to salvation Even if we recognise the technical difficulty of correlating action as a process in time with transcendent reality of spirit, the merit of moral conduct enables one to take a leap from the temporal to the timeless Such moral and altruistic action is not possible for one who is physically feeble Only those who are physically fit and strong can afford such action. The feeble and weak become selfish and subjective They are occupied more with themselves and their selfish interests, and are not inclined to venture upon altruistic conduct Physical feebleness leads to narrowing of spirit which is opposite of expansion of spirit needed for salvation. Liberality

15 नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ।  मु० उप० ३-२-४

16 शांकर भाष्य मु० उ० ३-२-४

17 आत्मन. मन. ।  छां० उप० ७-२६-१

18 बल वाव विज्ञानाद्भूय. ।  छां० उप० ७-८-१

and expansion of spirit which facilitate salvation are possible only for those who are physically strong and powerful. Though the latter are also likely to be carried away by the egoism and arrogance of physical power, the weak are less likely to be interested in altruistic action than the strong

Physical strength reaches its maturity in youth, though it can be maintained after it also Power is the real glory of youth A youth without physical powere represents temporal maturity of age without its real meaning The Taittiriya Upanishad establishes strong and powerful youth as the standard of value of human existence[19] Though the Upanishad proceeds to enumerate higher standards of happiness, which culminate in ultimate spiritual beautitude, the powerful youth is recognised as the supreme secular standard of earthly existence Even such recognition of powerful youth is a proof of the highest appreciation of health, youth and physical power as a supreme secular attainment in earthly life Such attainment is not detrimental to higher spiritual attainments On the other hand it can be highly conducive to the latter if it is judiciously used for this purpose

The importance of physical strength and power is so definitely appreciated in the Upanishads that the Shantipathas of several Upanishads contain ardent prayars for it The Kena Upanishad opens with a prayer for strengthening of all limbs and senses of the body[20] The same prayer is repeated in the opening of the Chhandogya Upanishad The Prashna Upanishad also opens with a prayer for physical fortitude and firmness of organs and senses of body[21] This prayer is repeated in the Mundaka and Mandukya Upanishads These prayers for physical

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19 तै० उप० ३-८

20 आप्यायन्तु ममागानि वाक् प्राणचक्षु श्रोत्रमथो वलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि ।

21 स्थिरैरङ्गै · · ।

fortitude and firmness of organs and senses of the body are undoubtedly evidences of the value accorded to them in the general attitude of Upanishads toward life A prayer for a strong and energetic body found in the Taittiriya Upanishad confirms this general attitude by an evidence from the text of the Upanishad.[22]

**5. Body as the seat of activity and other sense organs**

Body is a vital and a functional organism Vitality is the substance of its being which sustains through breathing and assimilation of food. Vital existence is subjective in the biological (and not epistemological) sense. It is largely confined to itself and to its own preservation This vital mode of organism is also functional in the sense that it maintains itself by a self-sustaining activity But this activity of vital being is largely esoteric Besides this the organism is also objective in function. Its activities pertain to the external world of objects This functional objectivity of organism is more developed in man than in higher animals They are endowed with ten or eleven senses, which are disposed towards the objective world and are involved in interaction with it As the Katha Upanishad says "The self-existent" God has so designed the senses that they dispose naturally towards the outer world and not towards the inner-self."[23] The Upanishads are mainly concerned with the realization of inner spirit and regard objective disposition of the senses as a diversion from and an obstruction in their aim The senses are treated as deluders of man. It is true that the senses are dualistic and in their obsessive form do engross a person too much in the world. But on the other hand senses are serviceable instruments of life If bodily being is the necessary condition of the Vedantic discovery of the spiritual reality and also of the possibility of its realization in life, the importance

22 शरीर मे विचर्षणम् । तै० उप६ १-४

23 पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत् स्वयभू. । क० उप० २-१-१

of sense organs is indubitable Developed sense organs of man have increased his conative, cognitive and affective efficiency to such an extent that he has become capable of contemplating and of endeavouring to realize highest realities of life Animals with lesser sensory efficiency have not been able to do it The sensory excellence of man commensurates with this intellectual, cultural and spiritual excellence Without manual efficiency, meaningful speech, and discriminating hearing all of which have not developed in animals, man could not have evolved a civilization with the discovery of and aspiration for spiritual reality.

So senses are the instruments of empirical as well as spiritual excellence in the life of man They are deluding only if they are not controlled and guided by higher mental and moral faculties of man The Katha Upanishad has likened them to the horses yoked to the chariot of human body[24] The supreme spirit is seated in this chariot of the body which is driven by intellect according to the intentions and instructions of the former The figure purports to the effect that body is the only vehicle for man on his journey to the spiritual destination and sense organs can carry it to this destination. They are to be controlled and directed by intellect acting according the intentions and instructions of the spirit seated within the chariot of the human body

The senses can become the tempters and deluders of man But their efficient functioning is considered by the Upanishads as ultimately inspired by the spirit residing in the body. The Kena Upanishad declares that spirit is the ultimate force working behind the sense organs by virtue of which the eye sees, the ear hears, the speech speaks and the vital power vitalizes the body.[25] The spirit cannot be apprehended by these senses but these senses are inspired by the spirit in their respective

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24 इन्द्रियाणि हयान्याहु क० १-३-४

25 श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रम् । केन० उप० १-२.

functions[26] This does not only prove the ultimate spiritual basis of the sense organs but it also indicates the spiritual lineage of them. If directed according to the requirements of spirit the senses can serve as instruments of a divine purpose of life. This purpose and path of life has been indicated in the very first verse of the Isha Upanishad.[27]

The sense organs have generally been enumerated as ten. They are well-known gates of the city of the body, according to the figure of the ancient fortified cities.[28] These ten senses were specfied very early in Indian thought and much of Indian philosophy centres round the concept of these senses They are mentioned in the very beginning of the Kena Upanishad and are described in the text of other Upanishads. The Katha and the Shwetaswatara Upanishads add mind, as an internal organ, to the ten senses and raise the number of gates of the body to eleven[29] If sense organ means an instrument of the body through which the body has its intercourse with the outer world, mind is also to be included in the sense organs In fact it is the supreme sense which governs and guides the activity of other senses

Body is a living and dynamic organism. It is constantly active in its preservative system, and also in its sensory context. The vital being is basically dynamic. Life is the inner activity of vitals The very etymology of the Sanskrit synonym for vital being (prana), signifies its inherent dynamics suggested by the verbal suffix 'an'. 'Pra' is a prefix which indicates excellence. 'Prana' thus means the excellent and inmost activity of body

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26 यच्छ्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिद श्रुतम् ।। केन १-७

27 ईशावास्यमिद सर्वम् । इश उप० १

28 नवद्वारे पुरे देही । श्वे० उप० ३-१८

29 पुरमेकादशद्वारम् । कठ० उ० २-२-१

which is the essence of living All sense organs are active in their own way, though manual and motor activity is understood to be more evident form of activity. All these activities are supported and sustained by body Thus the body can be treated as the general supporter of activities[30]

The specific functions of the senses are considered separately in the Upanishads and in later Indian thought The senses are treated as divine and in later thought specific divinities are assigned as presiding deities of those senses The ten external sense organs are divided into two groups The hand, feet, speech, genital organ and organ of excretion are classed in the motor group of sense organs They are evidently active. Hands are more significant among active organs, hence they have (in their designation as 'Kar') an intimate etymological ralation with the verbal root used for 'activity' (Kri) in general Eyes, ears, touch, smell and taste are five senses of knowledge. They are also active but specific experiences of vision, audition, touch, smell and taste are their notable fruit. Hence they are classed as senses of knowledge, as distinguished from the senses of action which are not specifically related to knowledge

**6. Efficiency and Excellence of Senses**

Body and its vital existence is the support of the senses. But the efficiency and excellence of senses contributes to the fulfilment of the earthly existence of man and towards its spiritual salvation. It is attained with the help of spiritual attitude and does in its turn help towards spiritual salvation in life The axiology of the Upanishads is remarkable for its reasonable emphasis upon the importance and values of body and senses. It reveals the spiritual motivation and direction of senses, while duly recognising the possibility of delusion which can be created by obsession of sensory pleasures Efficiency and excellence of senses is necessary for fulfilment of secular as well

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30 तद्धि सर्वाणि कर्माणि बिभर्ति । बृह० उप० १-६-३

is a spiritual life. It is true that sensory level of life is to be ranscended for spiritual realization, but inefficiency of senses or a denial of sensory life will deprive man of the most elementary condition of salvation

The Shantipathas of several Upanishads contain prayers for the efficiency of senses. These prayers are notable in the Kena, Prashna and Mundaka Upanishads. The sages pray at the opening of the Upanishad for invigoration and efficiency of all sense organs in which speech and hearing are specifically mentioned[31] They also pray for moral excellence of senses, ears, eyes etc., which is attained by spiritual direction of senses towards good[32] It is remarkable that Upanishads attached such importance to efficiency and excellence of senses in those ancient times Such appreciation of sensory excellence will be rarely found even in modern axiological treatises of philosophy. They contain more profound treatments of what are described as super-organic values and can thus be regarded as less secular than even the Upanishads which are believed to be otherworldly.

Eyes and ears are more developed among the human sense organs Speech is a notable human distinction. Animals also have a speech, but it has not developed in to an advanced musical and linguistic medium as it has been among human beings So these are the main senses attended to in the Upanishads. But besides these, lustre of the body particularly of the face, cheerfulness of the face, sweetness of the tongue and fragrance of the body are among the bodily and sensory excellences which have been appreciated in the Upanishads. These are remarkable aesthetic and cultural achievements of a philosophic tradition which is often accused of being other-worldly and ascetic.

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31 आप्यायन्तु ममांगानि ।

32 भद्र कर्णेभि: शृणुयाम देवा ।

The spiritual basis of the working of eyes and ears is revealed in the Kena Upanishad The superiority of eyes and ears is revealed in the Kena Upanishad. The superiority of eyes and ears is propounded in the Briharanyaka Upanishad[33] Vision is the foundation of life It is by virtue of vision that one moves carefully in the even and difficult terrain[34] Speech is a distinctive glory of man in comparision to animals It is regarded as the fourth dimension of the spiritual reality in Chhandogya. Languags, Literature and civilization have developed by virtue of the excellence of human speech with its alphabetical sounds and musical notes, their infinite combinations in the form of words and symphonies The commensurate power of the ear to receive and discriminate between the modes of these sounds and symphonies also contributes to the development of literature and music The vocal wealth of literature and music find its appreciation in hearing. Hearing is a glory of man[35] The ancient Indian literature and music, which are harmonised in the Veda, also find their accomplishment and appreciation in the glory of hearing[36] Indra is adored in the shantipatha of several Upanishads as one who possesses an excellent power of hearing.[37] In the Taittiriya Upanishad the sages pray for power of excellent hearing.[38]

Speech and hearing are correlated sensory functions of man. Speech is futile without hearing and hearing is not possible without speech Such commensurate character is not found perhaps is any other senses of man Power of hearing has developed among animals also But speech of animals is not so deve-

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33 चक्षुर्वै प्रतिष्ठा । वृह उप० ६-१-३

34 चक्षुषा हि समे दुर्गेच प्रतितिष्ठति । वृह० उप० ६-१-३

35 श्रोत्र वै सम्पत् । वृह० उप० ६-१-४

36 श्रोत्रे वे इमे सर्वे वेदा अभिसम्पन्ना । तृह० उप० ६-१-४

37 वृद्धश्रवा ।

38 कर्णाभ्यां भूरिविश्रुवम् । तै० उप० १-४

loped as that of man. The richness of hearing also depends on the richness of human speech Hearing is more passive, while speech is more dynamic. The value of speech has been adored and appreciated much in the tradition of Indian thought and in the Upanishads also. In the grammatical philosophy, speech is raised to the level of metaphysical reality and it is identified with the supreme spiritual reality called Brahman.[39] The Chhandogya Upanishad regards speech as the fourth dimension of reality or Brahman.[40] The Brihadaranyaka considers it as the glory of man.[41] Realization of the glory of speech (and also of vision and audition) gives glory to man in society.[42] Speech is divine and divine speech is truthful.[43] The cultural refinement of speech is a highly valuable trait of human personality. It attains excellence both in language as a medium of communication and as a mode of musical performance. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which deals in its earlier chapters with the singing of Vedic melodies, regards excellence of musical voice as the accomplishment of a Vedic singer.[44] It considers musical voice as the wealth of the vital being of man[45] The vital existence of man is identified in Indian thought with breathing. Speech also is closely associated with breathing It is produced by the varying frictions of breath (air) with organs of the throat and mouth. The musical melodies of the Vedas are regarded as the musical expressions of the vital being

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39 अनादिनिधनं ब्रह्म शब्दतत्वं यदक्षरम् । वाक्यपदीय—१-१
वाङ् वै ब्रह्म । बृह० उप० १-३-२० ।

40 वागेव ब्रह्मणश्चतुर्थः पाद. । छा० उप० ३-१८-३

41 वाक् वै वसिष्ठा । बृह० उप० ६-१-२

42 वाक् वै वसिष्ठा वसिष्ठ स्वानां भवत्यपि येषां बुभूपति य एव वेद ।
बृह० उप० ६-१-२

43 स: वै दैवी वाक् यया यदेव वदति तदेव भवति । बृह० उप० १-५-१८

44 बृह० उप० १-३-२०, १-३-२१ ।

45 स्वर एव स्वं (धन) बृह० उप० १-३-२५

enshrined in speech[46] A sweet voice is the wealth of a man. It is an asset in social intercourse and human relations It impresses and attracts other persons by its intrinsic divinity. The sweetness of voice is a spiritual quality of speech and is a valuable cultural accomplishment It is organic and innate to an extent But it is promoted by cultivation of spiritual non-duality from early age and is distorted by indulgence in duality through conflicts, quarrels and hostilities

It is remarkeble that the sages of the Upanishads recognised the value of a sweet voice, both for musical and social purposes, so early as in those ancient Vedic times which mark the dawn of human civilization and thought Specific references to sweetness of voice as a cultural accomplishment are found in three of the older Upanishads. In the Mundaka Upanishad the "Sweet voice" is presented as the cordial call of the sacrificial offerings for welcoming a meritorious person to heaven[47] In the Aitareya Upanishad we find a sage specifically praying for 'a honeyed tongue' i e for a sweet voice[48] The Shwetashwatara Upanishad depicts 'the sweetness and beauty of voice' as an incidental attainment of a person who advances on the path of yoga, Sweet and beatiful voice is one of the marks of his advance on the path of yoga and it is attained by him along with other excellences of personality

Thus we find that speech as a distinct accomplishment of human race is given importance in the Upanishads as a secular social as well as a spiritual value This vocal valuation of the Upanishads follows from the earlier Vedic tradition so profoundly based on the excellence of speech

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46 निश्वसितमस्य वेदा ।
एतत्प्राण प्रतिष्ठितो गीयते । वृह० उप० १-२-२६

47 प्रिया वाचमभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य ।
एष व. पुण्य सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोक । मु० उप० १-२-६

48 जिह्वा मे सधुमत्तमा । तै० उप०

### 7. Aesthetic excellence of face and body

The appreciation of the lustre of the body and of the face is a notable feature of the Upanishads in the context of the consideration of secular values in Upanishads Secular values are empirical earthly values as distinguished from the higher social, ethical and spiritual values. Food, wealth, health, sex etc are main among these secular values. Food and sex are bodily values as they primarly pertain to the body. These are organic and biological values of the body. But lustre of the body and particularly of the face is an aesthetic bodily value. It is not so utilitarian as food or so empirical as sex, but it is dominantly aesthetic. Lustre of the body and of the face marks the aesthetic excellence of personality. It is a special privilege of human beings. Hairy skins of animals do not possess it It is a unique human privilege like speech. Hence like speech it has been related to divinity and spirituality Supreme spirit or Brahman is divine energy and brilliance Those who observe Brahmacharya or spiritual discipline acquire this divine brilliance which reflects on their body and face This brilliance of body and face is a divine excellence and is attributed to celestial beings Mythological divinities and earthly incarnations of God are also depicted as possessing a bodily and facial brilliance which is described as an aura of light around their face.

This aesthetic excellence of the body and the face is primarily a physical quality contributed to organism by nutrition. Therefore many young and healthy person not professing to be spiritual also possess it The Upanishads also are aware of this physical basis of aesthetic excellence of body and face. The Chhandogya Upanishad asserts that the spiritual brilliance is derived from food,[49] and recognises that one who eats food

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49 तेजस्व्यन्नादो मवति । छां० ३-१३-१

50 ब्रह्मवर्चस्यन्नादो मवति । छा० उप० ३-१३-२

acquires aesthetic brilliance of body and face[50] But ultimately this aesthetic excellence of face and brilliance of body is spiritual It is a reflection of the spiritual experience of non-duality. Such experience is implicitly given to those who are gifted with a shining body and a brilliant face One who lacks it in his normal social life and is doomed to duality of alienation loses this brilliance Most people lose it in old age due to dissolution of social non-duality in advancing age Many people lose it in youth also Children are less likely to lose it as they are less likely to lose social non-duality in life due to their innocence

The spiritual secret and source of lustre of the face is revealaed in the Chhandogya Upanishad through the story of Satyakama, which is contained in the fourth section of the said Upanishad Satyakama was the son of a simple poor Brahmin woman who did not know even her gotra due to early demise of her husband He was accepted as a disciple by a noble sage Haridrumata Gautama Sage Gautama asked him to graze the cows till they had multiplied When the cows were multiplied Satyakama approached his preceptor with a shining face Sage Gautama looked at his shining and smiling face and exclaimed, "Dear disciple, your shining and smiling face indicates that you have realized the supreme spiritual reality of life[51] The spiritual light shines like a lotus, like white fire and like lightening.

The lustre of the face and the brilliance of the body as the aesthetic excellence of personality has been recognised in the Upanishads at several places The Chhandogya Upanishads appreciates aesthetic excellence[52] as energetic brilliance which is the fruit of spiritual adoration The Shwetashwatara Upanishad presents the brilliance of the body or the excellence of its complexion as the fruit of advancement on the path of yoga[53] One who

51 ब्रह्मविदिव सोम्य भासि । छा० उप० ३-१३-३

52 व्युष्टिमान् भवति । छां० उप० ३-१३-४,५

53 वर्णप्रसादम् । श्वे० उप० २-१३

adores the spirit reflected in the mirror attains a brilliant complexion His children also have a brilliant complexion and he imparts it to those who came in contact with him [54]

Such distinct recognition of the aesthetic excellence of the lustre of the face and the brilliance of the body indicates the cultural height of spiritual tradition of Upanishads. Bodily brilliance and facial lustre is a highly admirable aesthetic value of human culture It is apparently secular as it evidently belongs to body and face But it has a spiritual source, the secret of which is revealed in the Upanishads The Upanishads also recognise physical basis of it which lies in food The appreciation of the aesthetic excellence of personality indicates the finenness of Upanishadic admiration of secular values, which will be commended by the sophisticated cosmetic culture of modern times also The appreciation of the fragrance of the body as the fruit of yoga as found in the Shwetashwatara Upanishad marks the extent to which aesthetic excellence of body is considered in the Upanishads The spiritual secret of lustre of the face and of the fragrance of the body reveals the deeper spiritual truth of the secular and bodily values which men and women of highest culture prize with great longing and pride.



54 य एतमेवमुपास्ते रोचिष्णुर्हि भवति
रोचिष्णुर्हास्य प्रजा भवति । बृह० उप० २-१-९

CHAPTER VI

# VALUE OF VITAL BEING IN THE UPANISHADS

## 1. Introductory

Body is a living organism. It breathes, assimilates food, grows, procreates and performs sensory activities. These are the signs of a living organism which distinguish it from non-living things Human body has developed higher mental faculties also which are not given to animals and which have made advancement of society and civilization possible. But all this advancement depends on body as a vital being The principal of life which enlivens the body is a profound secret of existence. How has life evolved in matter is a question of evolution. But since life is evolved it is perpetuated by procreation and it is maintained by activity and food The Upanishads believe the supreme spirit to be the ultimate reality which sustains all existence. Vital being is also regarded to have originated from the supreme spirit [1] Activity of the senses also is inspired and governed by the supreme spirit

But the Upanishadic spiritualism does not deny the importance of bodily values It has been shown in the previous chapter that the Upanishads recognise the value of physcial strength. health and excellence of sensory functions Aesthetic excellence of the lustre of the face, brilliance of body and fragrance of the body are accorded special appreciation in the Upanishads

The existence of the body and functioning of its senses, as also the aesthetic excellence of body and face, all depend on

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1 यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । तै० उप० ३-१

आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते । प्रश्न उप० ३-३

the vital being i e Prana Prana is the fundamental vital principle of life It is the general principle of life, which sustains all particular bodily functions It is a secular value as it is common to animals and men It is subtle but observable in the form of its symptoms and effects It has been recognised as the fundamental principle of life in the Upanishads and has been dealt with in many of them. The elaborate treatment of prana found in several Upanishads indicates the importance that the Upanishads attach to this basic vital principle of life.

No references to Prana or vital beings are to be found in the more dominantly spiritual Upanishads like the Isha, Kena, Kath, Mundaka, Mandukya, and Shwetashwatara. Even the Taittiriya Upanishad, which deals elaborately with food (anna), does not make any mention of Prana or vital being It is only the Prashna Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka which consider the value of vital being with wide and serious concern. The second chapter of the Prashna Upanishad is devoted entirely to Prana or vital being. The third chapter also deals with Prana and is called in the very text as the Philosophy of Prana. The spiritual Philosophy of Prana is believed to lead to immortality[3] A younger inquirer Bhargave from Vidarbha asked the sage Pippalada. 'How many gods support man's existence and which of them is the highest among them ?'[4] The sage Pippalada said "Space air, fire, water, earth, speech, ear, eyes, mind—all these are divine" On this all these asserted their importance and expressed that they supported human existence by their power.[5] Prana who is higher to them all, asked them not to entertain a delusion Prana told them that he divided himself into five modes and supported the five elements in the body and five motor and five cognitive senses But they did not give credence to his words.[6] Upon this Prana came out of the body with

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2, 3 अध्यात्म चैव प्राणस्य विज्ञायामृतमश्नुते । प्रश्न उप० ३-१२

4 कत्येव देवा प्रजा विधारयन्ते । प्रश्न उप० १-१

5 प्रश्न उप० २-२

6 प्रश्न उप० २-३

pride As Prana came out of the body all others followed him as all the bees follow the queen bee When the queen moves out from the hive all other bees move after her. Similar was the condition of all senses Upon this all the senses recognised the supremacy of Prana as the supporter of the existence of man, and began to praise him.[7]

As all the spokes are centred in the navel of the wheel, so all senses and powers are centred in Prana or vital being. Prana is the supreme god, he is Prajapati, he is Indra etc All that exists in the universe is in the control of Prana[8] He is our father and mother He protects us and grants wisdom and wealth to people[9] Thus the Prashna Upanishad, with the help of a significant allegory reveals the Central importance of Prana or vital being as the supporter of the existence of man But with all this the Prashna Upanishad recognises the ultimate spiritual basis and origin of vital being The supreme spirit is the source and the substance of vital being[10] Prana is figuratively described as the shadow of supreme being As a shadow depends on the person for its projection, so does the vital being depend on the supreme spirit by which the former is inspired[11]

The second and the third chapters of the Prashna Upanishad can be regarded as a veritable philosophy of Prana[12] Though the reality of Prana is traced to its spiritual source and sustenance, yet the intermediate importance of prana as the central principle of physical and sensory life is duly recognised in it No where in this Upanishad is found any indication to the

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7 प्रश्न उप० २-४

8 अरा इव रथनाभौ सर्वं प्राणे प्रतिष्ठितम् । प्रश्न उप० २-६

9 प्रश्न उप० २-७,११ १३

10 आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते । प्रश्न उप० ३-३

11 यथैषा पुरुषे छाया अस्मिन्नेतदाततम् । प्रश्न ३-३

12 अध्यात्म चैव प्राणस्य । प्रश्न उप० ३-१२

effect that the vital, physical or sensory life is illusory and unreal On the other hand the elaborate and emphatic treatment of Prana as the supreme vital principle of life confirms its central importance in life It has been raised to the status of divinity and deified even into a cosmic principle of life[13] besides being the central principle of individual existence

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also contains an allegory which reveals the central importance of the vital being or Prana and its general superiority over discrete senses[14] This allegory also is called 'spiritual philosophy of vital being' like the allegory which is contained in the Prashna Upanishad and which has been briefly stated above. In the allegory contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad vital being or prana is distinguished as an untiring vital power in comparison to the different senses which tire out after exertion The weariness of senses is aligned to death in the Upanishad, which reminds us of the reference to sensory weariness found in the Katha Upanishad It is a discovery of the secret of life that the vital being of man never tires The constant working of the heart all the life is an example of it The sense which according to the allegory were inclined to monopolize life by constantly continuing their specific activity realized the superiority of vital being or Prana when they felt tired and recognised the untiring character of vital being or Prana.

The fifth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad also contains an allegory like that of the Prashna Upanishad, which elucidates and confirms the superiority of Prana or vital being over the senses Once there happened a dispute, so the allegory runs, between senses and the vital being as to which of them is superior to others and thus is of supreme importance. They went to Prajapati, their cosmic father and asked him "who is superior among

13 प्राण एव प्रजापति । प्रश्न २-७

14 बृह० उप० ६-१-१, ६-१-१३, १-५-२१

us ?" Prajapati replied "All of you get out of body turn by turn and he is superior to others whose departure from body leaves it most miserable First the speech left the body He returned after a year and asked the body how it could live without him The body replied, "I lived without you as a dumb man lives Like a dumb man I lived by vitals saw with eyes, heard with ears, thought by mind and acted by vitals Upon this the speech entered the body Next to speech the sight left the body and returned after a year and asked similar question The body replied "I lived as a blind man lives Like a blind man, I lived by vitals, spoke with tongue, heard by ears, and thought by mind" Upon this sight entered the body.

So it was done by the ears and the mind The experiment was repeated with similar result Last of all Prana or the vital being desired to leave the body. As the horse uproots the pegs with which his feet are tied to the ground, so all the senses were uprooted as the Prana or vital being disposed to leave the body They all appeared before him and submitted to him, 'you are our master, you are superior to us, pray, do not leave us' All the senses confirmed that their sustenance and power is ultimately derived from Prana or vital being[15] Therefore, according to the Upanishad the senses also are given the designation of Prana[16] They are all, in fact, modes of Prana or vital being

"An"[17] signifies the dynamics of life The prefix 'Pra' in 'Prana' suggests the efficiency and excellence of this dynamics of life Activity of senses is specific and limited The dynamics of Prana is general and wide It spreads over the whole body, as Shankara has explained in his commentary.[18] As the Chhandogya

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15 छा० उप० ५-१-७ से १५

16 छा० उप० ५-१-१५

17 छा० उप० ५-२-१ शाकर भाष्य

18 सर्व प्रकार चेष्टाव्यापिगुणप्रदर्शनार्थम् अन् इति प्राणस्य प्रत्यक्ष नाम
छा० उप० ५-२-१ शाकर भाष्य

Upanishad suggests figuratively the Prana is like the horse who drives the carriage of the body.[19] Prana drives the body. Prana drives the body. Horse has become the counter of power. Prana is the prime power that moves the body in the context and course of various activities

Thus the superiority of Prana over the senses and its supreme importance in life is established in the Upanishads by allegory and argument. Both the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads prescribe that first offerings in sacrifice be given to Prana.[20] With their ritualistis lineage these Upanishads confirm the vital value of Prana in the spiritual endeavours of life

Raikva, the sage who lived in a cart, revealed to king Janashruti, who offered wealth and land to him, that Prana is the samvarga It occupies the same place in life which Vayu occupies among gods[21] when a man sleeps all the senses, speech, sight ear, mind etc. retire to Prana or the vital being.[22] This implies that vital being is the essence of life. It subsits even when senses are not working e g in sleep The allegories cited above indicate the centrality of Prana or vital being as the support of all senses during working life The Samvarga vidya of Raikva reveals the deeper identity of man's existence with Prana or vital being by the example of sleeping state. A man lives even when he sleeps and when his senses are not waking. These allegories cited above prove the importance of Prana by the Method of Agreement and Difference. The Raikva vidya proves it by the Method of Residue When the senses are not working in sleep, what else can there be as the evidence and

19 छा० उ० ८-१२-३
20 छां० उप० ६-३-२
 बृह० ६-१६-१
21 वायुर्वाव सवर्गः । छां० उप० ४-३-४
22 छा० उप० ८-३-३

authority of life except Prana or vital being Prana is not mere breathing Various kinds of winds moving in the body are also modifications of Prana But Prana as general vital being is the principle of subtle and central dynamics of life secretly functioning within the body and sustaining its existence

Prana is considered in the Prashna Upanishad, as Vratya i e a being which has not been modified by culture[23] Vratya is a Vedic title used for those persons who are devoid of Vedic culture which is incorporated into life by Vedic sacraments and ceremonies Those persons who either do not undergo these Sacramental ceremonies or give up Vedic observances are reduced to the status of a Vratya. Vedic being is a cultural being which adopts cultural conduct in life Culture is an ethico-spiritual modification of natural tendencies of life. Vratya, who is devoid of Vedic culure, is a natural being governed by natural urges in their naked form. Prana or vital being is rightly designated as Vratya in the Prashna Upanishad It is the basic mode of man's natural existence Moral and spiritual modifications do not apply to it What is modified by culture is the sensory, motor and moral conduct of man Prana or vital being is the general substance of life which is common to man and animals It is the schema of life through which spirit directs sensibility and conduct of human beings By calling it Vratya the Prashna Upanishad has revealed the intrinsic natural character of life

The central importance of Prana and its superiority over senses and its excellence as the essence of life has been confirmed by several Upanishad on numerous occasions The two allegories contained in the Prashna and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads which signify the fundamental and central dependence of all senses including the mind, have been mentioned above in necessary details They elucidate by allegorical method how

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23 व्रात्यस्त्वम् प्राणैकर्षि· । प्रश्न उप० २-११

the whole sensory life is uprooted without Prana or vital being. How it sustains activity of all senses The allegory contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad depicts by a simile how all senses follow Prana as all bees follow the Queen bee The Prashna Upanishad uses the functional figure of king to elucidate the supreme functional power of Prana or vital being over all other vital functions and senses Just as the king assigns specific duties to his officers so Prana or vital being distributes specific functions to specific vital organs and senses.[24] Prana is understood to be nourished and sustained by food. It is apparently true but in fact, it is the Prana or vital being says the Prashna Upanishad who assimilates food, generates power and distributes it to all other organs and senses[25] Thus Prana is the ultimate and supreme vital being of man The figure of the navel of a wheel is used in the Prashna Upanishad to elucidate the centrality of Prana or vital being Just as all the spokes of a wheel are centred in the navel, so also all the senses are centred in the Prana or vital being[26] He holds them as the navel holds the spokes of the wheel It is by virtue of this central sustenance of Prana like the navel, that the wheel of life keeps on moving Without its central sustenance the senses will wither as the spokes will scatter and the wheel of life will become defunct The Chhandogya Upanishad also depicts the central importance of Prana or vital being by the figure of navel of the wheel It says, 'as all the spokes are dedicated to the navel so all functions of body are dedicated to the Prana or vital being'[27] This means that Prana or vital being does not only invigorate all activities of the body and senses, it also co-ordinates them. The final co-ordinator may well be the mind or the conscious

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24 यथा सम्राडेवाधिकृतान्विनियुङ्क्ते एवमेष प्राण इतरान् प्राणान् पृथक्पृथगवेव संन्निधत्ते । प्रश्न ३-४

25 एतद् हुतमन्न सम नयति । प्रश्न ३-५

26 अरा इव रथनाभौ सर्व प्राणे प्रतिष्ठितम् । प्रश्न २-६

27 छां० उप० ७-१५-१

principle but Prana or vital being is at least schema of this intelligent coordination of human life and knowledge As the Prashna Upanishad says Prana or vital being resides in the ultimate spirit along with all senses[28] So, even though the supreme spirit is the ultimate reality according to the Upanishads and Prana or vital being also is inspired by it, for all practical purposes Prana or vital being is the supreme functional reality of life

The figure of the sun is used in the Prashna Upanishad to describe the centrality and supremacy of Prana or vital being[29] Just as the sun is the centre of universe and the ultimate source of all life in it, Prana or vital being is the centre of human existence and it is also the source of sustenance of all motor and sensory activities of man In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Yajnavalkya greatest sage of the Upanishads, confirms Prana or the vital being as the supreme deity of existence[30] When asked by the king Janaka as to how many deities are there, Yajnavalkya mentions several numbers of deities But when asked as to who is the supreme deity, he names Prana or vital beaing as the one supreme deity of existence[31] The Brihadaranyaka designates Prana or vital being as Indra who is the king of gods[32] As Indra is king of gods, so Prana or vital being is the lord of senses and the body Indra is believed to be unique and without a rival So also Prana or vital being is unique and has no rival No one can challenge its supremacy Its uniqueness is confirmed by the fact that there is no alternative to it It is the absolute essence of life Man can live without one or other sense but he cannot exist without

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28 विज्ञानात्मा सह देवैश्च सर्वै ।
प्राणा भूतानि सम्प्रतिष्ठन्ति यत्र । प्रश्न उप० ४-११

29 आदित्यो ह वै बाह्य प्राण । प्रश्न उप० ३-८

30 वृह० उप० ३-६-१५

31 वृह० उप० १-५-१२

Prana or vital being. Vital being is the essence of life and identity of man's existence. The Taittiriya Upanishad regards it as the continuance of man's existence[33] Therefore, the Taittiriya Upanishad advises us to worship Prana or vital being as the the very life and breath of man's existence' It is the age or Brahman or the supreme reality.[34] Bhrigu, the son of sage Varuna came to realize after long penance that prana or vital being is Brahman or the supreme reality of life[35] He ultimately arrived at the final realization of reality as the Blissful Being, but vital being, though not absolutely ultimate, is the supreme reality of physical existence of man. Even recognition and realization of spiritual reality depends on it. Prana is the father of man as even as Prajapati is the father of the universe[36]

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad recognises Prana or vital being as the truth of life,[37] though supreme spirit is the truth of truth[38] It means that metaphysically supreme spirit is, no doubt, the ultimate truth of existence, but practically Prana or vital being is the supreme truth of life. The Mundaka Upanishad expresses the ultimacy of supreme spirit but it also indicates the divinity and spirituality of Prana or vital being[39]. It is as though the incarnation spirit and sustains life as a divine principle Prana or vital being is the supreme controller of life's various activities It is the Lord of life. It is prayed to protect people as a mother protects children.[40] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also confirms that Prana or vital being is the protector

33 प्राणो हि भूतानामायु । तै० उप० २-३

34 प्राण ब्रह्मोपासते । तै० उप० २-३

35 प्राणो ब्रह्मे ति व्याजानात् । तै० उप० २-३

36 प्रश्न उप० २-७

37 प्राण एव सत्यम् । बृह० उप० २-१-१०

38 सत्यस्य सत्यम् । बृह० उप० २-३-६

39 मु० उप० २-१-३

40 मातेव पुत्रान् रक्षस्व । प्रश्न उप० २-१३

of life[41] It is not so evident in action as are the senses It is thus subtle and unknown. But it protects life unknowingly and with subtlety.[42] It vitalizes the existence of man It is basic power of the dynamics of human existence Hence it is called Prana i.e the life of life.[43] It controls the mind and body of man. The mind of man also depends on vital being[44] Mind and its functions disappear when vital being disappears They weaken when it weakens It protects body from injuries and cures from injuries[45] It heals the wounds of body The healing power is the unique virtue of vital being And healing is the cardinal principle of well-being of creatures Health is derived from healing Healing power of Prana is the Cardinal Principle of physical fitness So much is the importance of healing that the Vaisheshika philosophy considered it as an important character of spiritual reality and nullified the substantive difference between vital being and supreme spiritual reality[46] It ascribed all the functions of vital being to the supreme spiritual reality and identified the two in a comprehensive and concrete view of reality

Prana or vital being is the basic supporting power of life and its activities It supports and sustains all functions of life. It is the Lord of speech,[48] and in fact of all senses It is the invi-

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41 बृह० उप० १-४-७

42 बृह० उप० १-४-७

43 बृह० उप० १-४-७

44 प्राण बन्धन हि सोम्य मन । छा० उप० ६-८-२

45 छा० उप० ५-१३-४

46 प्राणापान-निमेषोन्मेष-जीवन-मनोगतीन्द्रियान्तरविकाराणि ।

वैशेषिक सूत्र

47 बृह० उप० १-३-२३

48 बृह० उप० १-३-२०, २१

gorating essence of the organs of the body.[49] Though the Prana or the vital spirit requires food for its sustenance, it acquires this sustenance by its own power through assimilation of food.[50] Vital spirit is gratified by food.[51] Prana or vital spirit constitutes the vigour and glory of human existence.[52] Vigour, power, and dignity of life are excellences of vital spirit.

The importance, excellence and superiority of Prana or vital spirit is recognised and confirmed in several Upanishads. The Prashna Upanishad indicates the implicit superiority of Prana or vital spirit in the self-confidence with which it warns the senses and advises them not to entertain any illusions about their status in relation to itself.[53] It explains to them that it sustains the body and the senses by dividing itself in five modes[54] The Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads also confirms the superiority of vital spirit. The Prana or vital spirit is called elder and the superior in Chhandogya Upanishad.[55] The senses were not convinced by the confident advice of Prana or vital spirit. Hence it had to be proved by the experiments described in detail in the Upanishads and britfly mentioned above in the body of this chapter.

Exactly like the Chhandogya Upanishad the Prana or vital spirit is described as elder and superior to senses also in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.[56] And this superiority of Prana or

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49 प्राणो वा अंगानां रस. । बृह० १-३-१९

50 बृह० उप० १-३-१७

51 बृह० उप० १-३-१८

52 प्राणो वै यशो वीर्यं । बृह० उप० १-२-६

53 प्रश्न उप० ५-३

54 प्रश्न उप० २-३

55 छां० उप० ५-१-१

56 बृह० उप० ६-१-१

vital spirit is confirmed by an experiment similar to that conducted in the Chhandogya Upanishad Both the experiments prove the superiority of Prana or vital spirit by demonstrating its indispensibility for human existence One can live without one or other sense But life is not possible at all without Prana or vital spirit The body and the senses tend to be uprooted just as Prana or vital spirit prepares to leave the body The Kaushitaki Upanishad also confirms the superiority of the Prana or vital spirit [57]

The elaborate treatment given the Prana or vital spirit in several Upanishads and the primary importance given to it as the supreme support of human existence, confirm our view that secular values receive due attention and importance in Upanishads Prana or vital spirit may be imperceptible but it is the principle of physical existence of man As supreme support of life Prana is the basis of all secular values of life If supreme spiritual reality is the value of all values, Prana or vital spirit is the value of all secular values This recognition of vital value and basis of life is a profound secular truth of Upanishads which are believed to propound a transcendental spiritualism which ignores all secular values



57 कौ० उप० ३-४

CHAPTER VII

# VALUE OF FOOD IN UPANISHADS

Prana or vital being is the primary secular value according to the Upanishads Several Upanishads confirm Prana or vital being as the fundamental support of sensory, motor and mental life. The supremacy of prana or vital being is demonstrated in the Upanishads by allegorical experiments which have been stated in the foregoing chapter. Prana or vital being is the essence of man's existence and all functions of life depend on it. Prana or vital being is a physical and secular value which is common to men and animals Not only all other secular values like sensory functions, sex etc but all higher values also depend on it Metaphysically the Prana or vital spirit might well be a creative manifestation of supreme spiritual reality, but empirically even the recognition, discovery and realization of the spiritual reality in life becomes possible only by virtue of vital existence Life is the primary condition of all cultural achievements of man Empirically it is an a priori value of life. Hence it is identified with life in etymology and empirical usage

Now Prana or vital being depends on food. Food is assimilated into body and it nourishes Prana and sustains its constant functioning which is the meaning of life. It is true that food also is assimilated by the power of Prana or vital spirit, but when assimilated food nourishes and sustains life. Without Prana existence of man ceases He become dead and is reduced to physical elements of which his body is composed But Prana depends on food, without food Prana or vital being withers Not only physical but mental activities of man also weaken without food

The importance of food for life and learning is elucidated in the Upanished in two parables contained in the Chhandogya

Upanishad The parable of Ushasti found in the beginning of the Chhandogya Upanishad illustrates the necessity of food for living and impossibility of surviving without food Ushasti, a sage of Upanishadic times, thus the parable runs, could not get any food for some days, because the crop in the region in which he lived was devastated by hailstorm He wandered in search of food for several days alongwith his young wife He came to an elephant keeper and begged food of him The elephant keeper said that 'I have no other food except these boiled black pulses, which I am eating' Ushasti asked the elephant keeper to give him some of those pulses He disregarded under pangs of hunger, the cultural consideration that he should not eat from those pulses which have been polluted by another person by starting to eat them. He refused the water offered by the elephant keeper for the same cultural consideration When questioned by the elephant keeper "Are these pulses also not polluted like this water ?" Ushasti replied that they were verily so, but that he could not help taking them because it was necessary for him to save his life under the situation If he did not accept them he could not survive, unpolluted water could be available elsewhere also

Ushasti saved his life by eating those black pulses offered to him by the elephant driver and went to attend the sacrificial session organized by a king There at this session it was to be proposed as to which of the deities is to be invoked Ushasti proposed that this deity was Prana or the vital being Later Ushasti proposed that this god is food, as all people live by taking food[1] The section of the Upanishad dealing with the parable of Ushasti and his presiding over the sacrificial session organized by the king with a ritual chant for food in which Varuna, Prajapati and

1 सर्वाणि ह वा इमानि भूतानि अन्नमेव प्रतिहरमाणा जीवन्ति ।

छा० उप० १-११-९

Sun are invoked to bestow food, ends with a canine cry for food[2]

This parable of Ushasti contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad reveals in the light of a critical situation the primary importance of food for life and its cultural activities, Ushasti has confirmed the dependence of life on food in clear words. "I could not survive if I did not take these pulses given by you (the elephant keeper)[3] He also propounds the general principle that "all people live by food" and they could not survive without food The prayer to the gods of rain and sunlight who nourish crops and corn is a religious ritual declaring the need of food for life, which is so glaringly recognised in the Chhandogya Upanishad in the parable of Ushasti

The other parable which confirms the importance of food not only for living but also for learning (as mind also cannot work properly without food) is also found towards the end of the Chhandogya Upanishad This is the parable of Shwetaketu son of Aruna who returned home after observing Brahmacharya for twenty four years at the place of his preceptor but without acquiring requisite humility which is the sign of spiritual realization. Observing the impudence of his son Shwetaketu, sage Aruni, his father, instructed him to keep fast for fifteen days and to live on water alone. The father consoled the son by saying that life survives on water and he would not die by not taking food for fifteen days Water will sustain him

So the son did, according to the instructions of his father. After fifteen days he came to his father. The father asked him to recite the hymns of the Vedas—Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda The son could not recollect and recite them due to his feebleness caused by fasting for fifteen days. The son said, 'Sire, I cannot

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2 छा० उप० १-१२-५

3 न वा अजीविष्यमिमामखादन्निति । प्रश्न उप० १-१०-४

recollect and recite them' The father said to the son—"Sweet son, just as the fire which is fed with ample fuel and has consumed most of this fuel and a little fire is left in it like a firefly, it does not have much burning power, similarly fifteen parts of your vital being are exhausted without (fuel of) food and only one part of vitality is left So you have become feeble without food and you are not capable of recollecting and reciting Vedic hymns You take food, and you will soon regain the power to understand and recite the Veda

On this Shwetaketu took food His energies and senses revived He recollected and understood the Vedic hymns he had learnt before He came to his father who said, "Even if a little spark of fire is left, it flares up if it is fed with fuel So the one part of your vitality which remained out of sixteen after fifteen days fasting has flared up like fire and so now you can recollect and understand the Vedic hymns you learnt before Water has sustained your vitality though it reduced due to want of food and now it is revived by fuel[4]

This parable of Shwetaketu substantiates the value of vital spirit and food for life It confirms the vital truth of life by the method of concommitant variation The dependence of Prana or vital being on food is also confirmed in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad It says that the vital being withers without food[5] It is recognised that the dependence of Prana or vital being on food is not absolute or one-sided It sustains life only when it is assimilated The assimilation of food is a vital function It is the function of the vital being It assimilates the food, then only food sustains life or vital being If the vital being does not assimilate food, food rots[6] Therefore food is not to be regarded an ab-

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4 छा० उप० ६-६-६

5 शुष्यति वै प्राण ऋते अन्नात् । वृह० उप० ५-१२-१

6 तथा पूयति अन्नमृते प्राणात् । वृह० उप० ५-१२-१

solute reality It is true that with all this relativity life or vital being cannot sustain without food It depends on food and withers without it The concrete truth as it is revealed in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is constituted by a unity of the two vital being and food. The two together make the whole truth Man's existence depends on vital being with food to sustain it At another place in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad food is compared to the binding string which holds the vital being like the post to which life is bound. It is bound by the string of food[7] It means that vital being is the integral principle and essence of life But it is sustained in the body by food

The Chhandogya Upanishad also confirms this truth According to it Prana or vital being seeks food for its sustenance[8] Chhandogya is an Upanishad belonging to Samveda which is the Veda of music It is inquired in the Upanishad; what is support of music ? "Swara or musical voice" is the reply. Again when asked what is the support of voice ?" "Prana or vital being is the reply " It is true that voice depends on vital being. When it becomes feeble one cannot speak loudly. When vital being departs from the body one cannot speak, he becomes silent Again when asked what is the support of Prana or vital being, it is replied that "food is the support of vital being." As Shankara has elucidated in his commentary; it is food which holds and supports vital being in the body[9]

The Chhandogya Upanishad even regards food as the seed of the body.[10] Just as a tree springs from a seed so the body grows from food Of course food or corn is not directly the seed of the

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7 प्राण. स्थूणा अन्नं दाम । वृह० उप३ २-२-१

8 प्राणस्य का गतिरित्यन्नमिति । वृह० उप० १-८-४

9 अन्नावष्टम्भो हि प्राण. । वृह० १-८-४ शांकर भाष्य

10 छां० उप० ६-८-४

body The food is indirectly the cause of the body. The Prashna Upanishad explains this indirect causality Food or corn is regarded in it at the god of generation (Prajapati) It is common knowledge that men are born of semen which contains the seed of generation The sperms which are the actual seed of body flow in the semen Semen and also sperms are generated from the food that a man eats and from this semen human beings are born.[11] Thus food or corn is the seed of the body, as is propounded in the Chhandogya Upanishad

The Mundaka Upanishad holds that the vital being or Prana depends on food[12] This is supported by several Upanishads as stated above The Chhandogya Upanishad considers food as superior to physical strength[13] The meaning of it is that physical strength depends on food Food is the cause or the source of physical strength Cause is greater than the effect as the later depends on the former It is in this sense of casual source of physical strength that the Chhandogya Upanishad regards food as greater than physical strength It also regards food as the support of senses and the mind Senses work healthily only on the basis of physical strength which depends on food Hence the senses also depend on food

The mind also depends on food Mind and understanding become feeble without food It has been explained by the parable of Shwetaketu who fasted for fifteen days & became so weak by fasting that he did not recollect and understand Vedic hymns which he had learnt before The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad propounds that the mind is formed of food[14] The Chhandogya Upanishad also holds that mind is material in its nature and is form-

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11 छा० उप० ६-८-४

12 अन्नात्प्राणो। मु० १-२-८

13 अन्न वाव बलाद्भूय। छा० ७-९-१

14 बृह० उप० १-५-३, शाकर भाष्य स्मृति

ed of food[15] Shankara explains it in his commentary that mind is material because it is composed of food[16] The Chhandogya Upanishad explains scientifically and analytically how the mind is made of food and is consequently material It divides food into three parts according to its crudity and fineness. It understands that the crudest part of food becomes excretion. The finest part of food makes the mind and the intermediate part forms the flesh of the body.[17] Modern psychology identities mind with the grey matter which forms the brain It is remarkable that the Upanishads understood the material formation of mind in those ancient days when biological experimentation had not even been started

This physical nature of mind also indicates the inclination of the Upanishads towards understanding the physical basis of consciousness and spirit in man. This attitude seems to be the opposite of the extremely transcendental which is often attributed to the Upanishads and according to which the whole physical existence is illusory and unreal. This physical origin of mind is also to be reconciled with the general Upanishadic view of creation according to which the whole physical universe proceeds from the spiritual reality called Brahman

In the course of this reconciliation it is to be noted that the Upanishads regard food or corn so highly that they often raise it to the status of Brahman or the ultimate spritual reality. it is true that after all, they do not finally confirm food or corn as the ultimate spiritual reality But they do consider it in course of their quest for ultimate reality as an approximation

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15 अन्नमयं हि सोम्य मनः ।  छां० उप० ६-५-४

16 ततश्चान्नोपचितत्वात् मनसो भौतिकत्वमेव ।
छा० उप० ६-५-१ शांकर भाष्य

17 अन्नमशितं त्रेधा विधीयते तस्य यः स्थविष्ठो धातुस्तत्पुरीषं भवति यो मध्यस्तन्मांस योऽणिष्ठस्तन्मनः ।  छां० उप० ६-५-१

to the ultimate spiritual reality. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad does on an occassion confirm that food is identical with ultimate spiritual reality[18] The Taittiriya Upanishad contains a whole treatise on food Bhrigu the son of Varuna was instructed by his father to observe penance and to discover reality for himself. At a stage of his quest he came to realize that food is the ultimate reality.[19] This realization was not of course final but it indicates at least approximation of food to reality Ultimate reality can be only that which is the ultimate source and support of life Bhrigu came to realize that man is composed of the essence of food[20] Man is formed of food as explained above on the basis of the Chhandogya Upanishad Bhrigu came to realize that people are born of food and they live by food Food is the ultimate support of man Hence it is the ultimate reality and is to be adored as such[21] The vital being of man is glorified by food[22] It inspires life and is to be recognised at ultimate divine reality[23]

Upon this discovery of Bhrigu follows his gospel of food It is the most secular part of the Upanishads and is to be seriously considered by those who believe the Upanishads to be otherworldly or world-negating and life-negating What is more secular and more earthly than food? What philosophy can be more secular than a philosophy which raises food to status of highest & most sanctified reality Taittiriya Upanishad after propounding food, at least provisionally, as the highest reality, proceeds on with most sacred injunctions regarding food It exhorts us not

18 अन्न ब्रह्म इत्येक आहु । वृह० उप० ५-१२-१

19 अन्न ब्रह्मेति व्याजात् । तै० उप० ३-२

20 अन्नात् ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । तै० उप० ३-२

21 अन्न ब्रह्मोपासते । तै० उप० २-२

22 अन्नेन वाव सर्वे प्राणा महीयन्ते । तै० उप० १-५

23 अन्नं ब्रह्मेनि व्याजानात् । तै० उप० २-३

to disregard food, as it sustains our life.[24] It means that we should regard it with sanctity It is on the basis of such scriptural injunctions that Indian people regarded food with divine sanctity and designated it as 'anna-devata' Inspired by this spirit of sanctity for food, they never disregarded or wasted it They accepted it as a gift of God. They kept it with great care and cooked it with almost religious devotion. Kitchen has been a veritable temple for Indian women in which they have worshipped food and fire as gods of highest divine excellence The injunctions of the Taittiriya Upanishad for not disregarding food,[25] and for not neglecting it[26] were observed with religious sanctity and faith.

The positive injunction of the Taittiriya Upanishad for increasing, growing and acquiring food (i e grain) confirms more strongly the positivistic and secular outlook of the Upanishads It exhorts people to acquire abundant food grains, presumably by cultivating but also by begging [27] The motto of grow more food adopted by the Agricultural Ministry of Government of India has not only been adopted from the Taittiriya Upanishad but is a literal translation of the Upanishadic exhortation to people [28] The Upanishad also exhorts people to collect and acquire abundant food-grains, not only for their own food, but also for their guests [27] The guest was treated in Indian tradition with great reverence He was considered to be almost divine Travelling in extensive plains a man could be required to rest for night in any village He came as an unexpected guest. As the date of his arrival not be known, he was designated as 'atithi' a person the date of whose arrival could not be known or anticipated But he was

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24 अन्न न निन्द्यात् ।  प्राणोवा अन्नम् ।  तै० उप० ३-६

25 अन्न न निन्द्यात् ।  तै० उप० ३-७

26 अन्न न परिचक्षीत ॥  तै० उप० ३-८

27 यया कया विधया बह्वन्न प्राप्नुयात् ।  तै० उप० ३१०

28 अन्नं बहु कुर्वर्ती ।  तै० उप० ३-९

29 तै० उप० ३-१०

to be welcomed and given food. The Indian gospel of hospitality is an example of the high humanity which marked Indian culture And the Upanishadic exhortation to people to acquire abundant food-grains not only for themselves but for their uncertain guests, marks the great regard of Upanishads for secular, and material values along with human and cultural values Food-grains are to be acquired also to be given as alms to beggars particularly the Brahmacharis, the spiritual students of ancient India, who were required to be supported by public gifts of food grains.[30]

The Upanishads do not only confirm the importance of food-grains for sustenance of the vital being of man and for his physical strength, but they also exhort man to grow ample food-grains and to acquire and collect enough of them for himself as well as for charity. They have not given so much importance to wealth as it is not so necessary for life Abundance of wealth is conducive only to luxury of life, which is not consistent with the Upanishadic view of life which is moderate and borders on ascetism But food is necessary for life Hence abundance of food-grains, at least for need is emphasised in the Upanishads The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is notable for emphasising this quantitative importance of food-grains It reveals the productive secret of food-grains by virtue of which they become inexhaustible[31] It also advises a kind of worship which helps to make stores of food-grains inexhaustible[32] The emphasis on the quantity of food-grains confirms the normal and necessary attitude of Upanishads towards basic secular values

Besides the physical and material aspect of the relation of mind to food, the Upanishads also suggest the psychological and ethical effect of it Food-grains give joy to men When there is

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30 छां० उप२ ४-३-५,६

31 बृह० उप० १-५-२

बृह० उप० २-१-३

ample rain and consequently there is hope of abundant food-grains people are greatly delighted.[33] Every farmer directly realizes this simple but great truth of life indicated in the Prashna Upanishad Others also realize it indirectly. Food supports and sustains the vital being. Abundant food promises abundant life free from the danger of famine and starvation. The hope of abundant life expresses in the jubilence of people at the expectation of good crops from ample rain The delight which food gives to vital being of man can easily be noticed in its innocent form in the child. The child rejoices when you givt it something to eat Adults lose this joy due to their growing involvement in other worries of life and due to being accustomed to the routine of eating. They retain some joy of eating in the form of taste and variety of food Feast is a cultural mode evolved by man to create common joy in eating together Integration of delight in daily food will be a great achievement of civilization.

The ethical aspect of food is an important feature of Indian view of life. It follows from the psychological aspect of food stated above. Physically and materially mind is made of food But mind is also the seat of morals Good and evil are the expressions of the mental attitude of man in life The ethics of food is implied in the morality or immorality of the manner in which it is acquired If it is acquired by exploitation it is evil and sinful. Hence in begging particularly it is to be carefully observed how is the food acquired by the persons who gifts it in charity. Food is to be accepted in charity only from a person of merit, because if one accepts it from a sinner he also shares his sin.[34] This idea of ethical character of food has been a very influential idea in Indian cultural tradition. It is an evidence of the recognition in ancient Upanishads of the co-ordination of

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33 प्रश्न उप० २-१०

34 दुष्कृत हि मनुष्याणामन्नमाश्रित्य तिष्ठते ।
यो हि यस्यान्नमश्नाति स तस्याश्नाति किल्बिषम् ।।

ethical virtue with economic justice which is cardinal quest of human civilization.

The Upanishads recognise the importance of food to such an extent that they not only emphasise it as the source of sustenance of life and advise acquisition of food-grains, but they also describe man and even the self as an eater of food-grains The Chhandogya Upanishad emphasises the nature of man as an eater of food[35] So also the Kaushitaki Upanishad has a prayer for making the child an eater of food[37] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad describes the self as the eater of food[38] The spirit may be transcendental in its metaphysical nature, but as embodied in human person it is sustained by food and realization of its transcendental nature in life can be possible only when first it is sustained by food in the body of man

Water is a necessary part or accompaniment of food It is included in the wider concept of food But as Upanishadic discourse of food is centred round food-grains, separate mention of water is made in several Upanishads Food is connected with hunger, and biological demand for water is called thirst. Hunger and thirst are separately mentioned in the Aitareya Upanishad,[39] and also in the Chhandogya Upanishad[40] Water is more fundamental food of man. It has been identified in the etymology of Sanskrit language in a synonym for water (jeevan) which is a common term for life In a hot country like India, the importance of water can be easily realized When one is thirsty he

35 छा० उप० ४-३-८, १-१३-४

36 ऐत० उप० १-२-१

37 कौषीतकी उप० २-६

38 बृह० उप० ४-२-२४

39 अशनायापिपासे । ऐत० उप० १-२-५

40 अशनायापिपासे छा० उप० ६-८-३

needs water urgently. The need for food becomes urgent only after some days. Shwetaketu was instructed to live only on water for fifteen days, without any food He became feeble but he survived without food But one cannot survive long without water. Hence the Chhandogya Upanishad regards water as the essence of life,[41] and even considers body to have originated from water[42] Water is necessary for crops and also for life. Hence the Chhandogya Upanishad regards water as greater than food-grains.[43] Food-grains and water (anna-jala) is used as a combined term in common usage to signify the sustenance of life.



41 आपोमय प्राण । छा० उप० ६-५-४२, ४

42 छां० उप० ६-८-५

43 छा० उप० ६-२-४, ७-१०-१, १-८-४

## CHAPTER—VIII

# ECONOMIC VALUE IN THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads contain the teachings of ancient Indian sages who lived a simple and economically contented life in the forest hermitages Their main occupation was not economic but cultural and spiritual They devoted themselves to learning, teaching and meditation about the ultimate reality which was found by them to be spiritual i e transcendent of all secular values including wealth This transcendent nature of ultimate spiritual reality has been repeatedly emphasised in the text of the Upanishads This spiritual truth of life and existence is the greatest discovery of human quest It is miracle of Indian genius to have revealed so clearly the deepest spiritual secret of life in the earliest times of human speculation and to have made it the first finding of India which could not be even the last finding of world thought during thousands of years after the Upanishads Not to say of discovering the spiritual truth of life in such concrete form, the later world, both in India and outside it, has not been able to appreciate and adopt in social life this great spiritual truth which alone can lead mankind to salvation by eliminating evil and by promoting good, beauty and joy in life

With such an early discovery of the spiritual truth of life it was not possible for the sages of India to prescribe a life of indulgence in wealth and pleasures of secular life for themselves or for others It was in a life inclining towards asceticism that such a discovery could be possible and with this discovery a life of indulgence was unthinkable Only a moderate secular life could be consistent with such a discovery. That the sages of Upanishads recognised and recommended for people All that their recognition of secular values implies is that these values are not to be denied as with their denial even spiritual pursuit will not

be possible, or we may say even life will not be possible. Importance of food for life has been recognised in the Upanishads mainly in this form of a necessity of life. Acquisition and collection of abundant food-grains has been recommended only for security of future and for feeding guests Food-grains as a wealth have no-where been appreciated in the Upanishads as it came to be later by those who could grow or acquire it in such abundance.

The Upanishadic view of wealth or economic value is as moderate as the view about food Food is necessary for life Denial or depreciation of it is unwise and impractical On the other hand the Upanishads have indicated the unwisdom of denying the value of food by parables which have been narrated in the previous chapter. But, as wealth is not so necessary as food the Upanishads have not extolled it. Particularly the Katha Upanishad, has depreciated it in the context of the dialogue of Nachiketas with Yama, the God of death This depreciation of wealth is intended to dispel the common delusion of excessive or exclusive love of wealth and discourage lust for it Its purpose is to reveal that spiritual reality is above and beyond wealth. It aims at defining the cultural limitations of wealth, that man cannot be satisfied with wealth and cultural values cannot be acquired by it

But there are several instances in the Upanishads which indicate that the sages of Upanishads attached due importance to wealth or economic value as a means of life, though not as a means to pride and glory as lovers of wealth do The Upanishadic view of wealth is moderate and reasonable as is the view about food It is not extremtly ascetic, though it seems to border on ascetism particularly in the examples of Nachiketas who declined wealth and Yajnavalkya who is depicted as renouncing his possessions along with his two wives Food is recognised in the Upanishads as a necessity, wealth is not such a necessity But wealth also is not regarded as unreal or illusory. It has not been condemned, as sometimes the senses are condemned The illusion

which obscures spiritual reality from our vision is not the wealth itself but our excessive love of it and consequent vanity and indulgence Wealth is a means to luxury and comforts, which deviate a man from the path of morality and spirituality It is an external possession with which we can identify our being when we are not able to acquire any thing higher But such identification is deluding Wealth is external to our being which is constituted more intimately by internal spiritual excellence. It is more external to body which, though physical, is integral to our being Hence wealth is not so much emphasised as food in the Upanishads

The Isha Upanishad presents a balanced attitude towards wealth also like all other secular, social and ethical values In its very first verse it warns us against coveting wealth[1] Lust for wealth is natural and irresistible Hence the Upanishad explains the real status of wealth in life It suggests that wealth is not a real value of life, because it is external[2] We treat wealth as our possessions, but it is not really our own, as it always remains external to our being The value of wealth is only an instrumental value as a means to higher ends of life It can serve as a valuable means only when it is integrated with a spiritual attitude to life Spiritualization of wealth and other means of life is the opening gospel of Isha Upanishad[3] Spirit is a common (and not individual) reality Spiritual commonness of experience is the secret of delight in life So common happiness is an objective test of spiritualization of wealth and other material means of life In modern language such an attitude to economic value can be designated as economic socialism which alone can ensure social justice There is no place for greed and personal aggrandisement in such an economic view. Hence the Isha Upanishad advises economic contentment and abandonment of greed

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1 मा गृध । ईश उप० १

2 कस्य स्विद् धनम् । ईश उप० १

3 ईशावास्यमिद सर्वम् । ईश उप० १

A verse (number 15) towards the end of the Isha Upanishad[4] indicates the illusion which is likely if the opening gospel of the Upanishad is not followed. Amassing of wealth makes a man vain and deludes him away from truth. Infatuation of wealth blinds one's vision of truth A cup or cover of gold conceals the truth from his vision. It is only vision of spiritual reality or grace of God which can remove this golden covering and can help a truth-loving man to see the truth This can be possible only when one looks on the world as the Kingdom of God and enjoys things with contentment and without greed, as a sacred gift from God, and understands that wealth of world is not his property and is also not integral to his being

This balanced economic view of the Isha Upanishad first presents the principle of right economic adjustment which can also be conducive to spiritual salvation, then in the end it also indicates the delusion which results from lust of wealth and also the need of dispelling this delusion for realization of truth in life. This view of Isha Upanishad reconciles material life with spiritual salvation of man

The Kena Upanishad is primarily devoted to the revelation of the supreme spirit which supports and sustains the dynamics of vital, sensory and mental life. There is no occasion for consideration of any other thing in its brief and concise text

The Katha Upanishad contains a profound treatment of both material and spiritual values It also is dominantly spiritual The occasion for the consideration of the value of wealth arises in it when Yama offers a boon of abundent wealth, along with other materiaal pleasures of life, to Nachiketas for he failed to receive the latter as a guest immediately as the latter arrived at his place and felt himself guilty of keeping a quest waiting for three

4 हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
तत्व पूषन्नपावृणु सत्य धर्माय दृष्टये । ईश० उप० १५

days[5] This gift of wealth included cattle, horses, chariots[6] elephants besides gold[7] All these make for glory and happiness in life Yama offered to Nachiketas these material temptations to dissuade him from asking about the secret of death and life after death[8] Nachiketas was the son of a saint who gave away his cows in charity[9] His ascetic and philanthropic heritage gave him a culture on account of which he could not be tempted by material wealth and pleasures So he declined the material offers of Yama and gave arguments which evince his spiritual culture He insisted on asking ultimate spiritual questions to Yama Nachiketas does not actually deny or condemn wealth, but he exposes the limitations and futility of it in a manner which borders on ascetism He associates limitation of wealth with the limitation of life in regard to duration[10] Life is not endless It is a limited, duration. When life ends, pleasures of wealth and senses also end with life Death terminates life and destroys all meaning of it[12] Moreover wealth alone cannot satisfy man[13] Wealth is an external possession of man and cannot be identified with his inner being Love of wealth increases one's craving for it and deviates him from the path of spiritual quest Hence Nachiketas declines Yama's offer of wealth and other material pleasures of life, those who devote themselves to the pursuit of wealth and revel in material pleasures of life are regarded by Nachiketas

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5 कठ उप० १-१-६

6 कठ उप० १-१-२५

7 कठ उप० १-१-२३

8 कठ उप० १-१-२५

9 कठ उप० १-१-१

10 जीवितमल्पमेव । कठ उप० १-१-२६

11 कठ उप० १-१-२६, १-१-२८

12 श्वोभावा मर्त्यस्य । कठ उप० १-१-२६

13 न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्य । कठ उप० १-१-२७

as blind persons being led by the blind.[14] Both of them do not see the real goal and real path of life. Those who are obsessed by love of wealth pass from death to death in life after life.[15] They never come to the path of spiritual salvation.

First Yama tests the spiritual fortitude of Nachiketas by offering him temptations of material wealth, but when he finds Nachiketas firm in his spiritual faith and untempted by wealth and pleasures, he congratulates Nachiketas for his detachment from wealth which binds numerous persons by its charm.[16] Yama is surprisingly pleased with Nachiketas for being above those persons who are mostly involved in the pursuit of wealth without understanding its futility and limitations. After testing the spiritual sincerity of Nachiketas, Yama reveals to him the spiritual secret of immortal life beyond death which he so insistently inquired of from Yama

The parable of Nachiketas seems to have an ascetic reflection in his recognition of the limitations and futility of wealth. But this limitation of wealth is not tentamount to condemnation and denial of wealth In fact it reveals the inadequacy and insufficiency of wealth for complete fulfilment of life. There is even a recognition of the place and value of wealth life in Katha Upanishad Nachiketas wittily suggests that wealth will come to him just as a gift of mere audience with Yama[17] While recognising the limitations and futility of wealth, Nachiketas does suggest in his witty remark the due place and value of wealth The charitable attitude of his father also indicates the recognition of the due place and value of wealth, which was counted in terms of cows in ancient India This economic propriety can be main-

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14 अन्धेनैव नीयमाना । कठ उप० १-२-५

15 कठ उप० १-२-६

16 यस्या मज्जन्ति बहवो मनुष्या । कठ उप० १-२-३

17 लप्स्यामहे वित्तमद्राक्ष्म चेत् त्वा । कठ उप० १-२-२७

tained only by observing contentment and philanthrophy which is exemplified by Uddalaka, the father of Nachiketas This moderate economic view with a tinge of ascetism is the right attitude towards wealth and pleasure, which is consistent with the spiritual aspirations of man Such an attitude is coherent with the spiritualization of material means and limitation of wealth by contentment which have been propounded in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad

Much in the manner of Nachiketas does another sage decline the gifts of wealth offered by a king and chooses to inquire about some deeper spiritual secrets of life which were supposed to be known to that king only. His story is narrated in the Chhandogya Upanishad in its fifth chapter part three It confirms the recognition of higher spiritual values as superior to wealth on the part of sages of the Upanishads though they accepted wealth also as a necessary means of living The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad contains in a chapter,[18] a significant valuation of wealth in comparison to spirit It regards the spirit as the central navel of life and considers wealth as the circle of the wheel of life.[19] It signifies that wealth is a peripheral value while spirit is the central value of life This valuation is elucidated by the example of a person who is robbed of all his possessions but who is secure with his body and soul In such a situation we understand that the man is deprived only of external possessions which are only of peripheral value [20]

The sages of Upanishads lived a simple and contented life bordering on asceticism There actual life and also their expressed attitude towards the plaec and value of wealth in life presents a moderate economic view which is a mean between austerity

18 बृह० उप० १-५-१५

19 बृह० उप० १-५-१५

20 बृह० उप० १-५-१५

and indulgence in wealth It is true that this view inclines towards ascetism which is the only precaution against delusion of economic excess. It is evident that such a view has no indication of the negation of economic value, as may be surmised by those who find the philosophy of the Upanishads as world negating.

The foremost example of such a balanced economic view is to be found in the life of Yajnavalkya who was the greatest saint of Upanishadic times There are three narratives of Yajnavalkya found in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad The first narrative is found in the third chapter of the Upanishad The story runs that Janaka the king of Videha performed a great sacrifice in which he proposed to give large charities to Brahmins Numerous learned Brahmins gathered in this sacrifice King Janaka desired to know as to who among them was the ablest in spiritual discourse. He ordered one thousand cows to be kept ready to be gifted to the winner in the contest. The horns of the cows were mounted with gold

King Janaka declared in the gathering of the Brahmins—"Revered Brahmins ! he who is the greatest spiritualist among you may drive away with him these cows" Yajnavalkya was reputed to be the greatest among sages of those days. Hence none of the Brahmins dared to drive away the cows Yajnavalkya asked his disciple Samashrava to drive away the cows with him[21] Upon this the other Brahmins present there protested and questioned how does Yajnavalkya declare himself as the greatest spiritualist amongst all Brahmins gathered here. One Ashwala among them challenged Yajnavalkya with the question "Are you the greatest spiritualist among us all ?" Upon this Yajnavalkya politely replied, "We bow to the spiritualist; at present we desire only the cows" Upon this Ashwala challenged Yajnavalkya for a discussion about spiritual questions which is described in the Upanishad.

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21 बृह० उप० ३-१-२

This narrative of Yajnavalkya indicates the positive and balanced attitude of Upanishadic spiritualism towards wealth Even a great spiritualist like Yajnavalkya regards wealth as a considerable value in life It does not signify greed for wealth But it certainly indicates due regard for it as a necessary value in life. The attitude of Yajnavalkya is modest about both spiritualism and wealth. It is in this modesty that the secret of synthesis of economic value with spiritualism consists

The second narrative of Yajnavalkya is found in the fourth chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Once Yajnavalkya came to the court of king Janaka. King Janaka asked Yajnavalkya whether he came for the cattle or for discussing subtle spiritual questions 'For both, your majesty' replied Yajnavalkya With this reply Yajnavalkya proceeded upon discussing subtle spiritual questions with king Janaka King Janaka felt enlightened at every stage of this discussion and was pleased to gift a thousand cows to Yajnavalkya Yajnavalkya accepted them with the remark, "My father was of the view that one should not accept a gift of wealth from a disciple without affording him satisfactory enlightenment" Presuming king Janaka's satisfaction with his preaching, Yajnavalkya accepted the gift of one thousand cows from the king.

This second narrative also depicts the same balanced view of Yajnavalkya about economic value and spiritualism which is presented in the first narrative This view is not an incoherent combination of wealth and spiritualism, but it is a coherent synthesis of them according to moderate secularism and dominant spiritualism which implies austerity, contentment and integration of moderate wealth with spirituality as indicated in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad

The effective inclination of this synthesis of economic and spiritual values towards ascetic austerity is expressed in the third narrative concerning Yajnavalkya This narrative is con-

tained in the second chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and is thus prior to the two narratives stated above This third narrative concerns the declaration of Yajnavalkya before his two wives about his intention to renounce the life of a house-holder. It is interesting to note that the two other narratives which are later to this one depict Yajnavalkya as accepting cows with golden horns from king Janaka as a gift for his great spiritual knowledge These later narratives indicate that there is no incoherence of moderate wealth as a means of living with spiritual aspiration. But the narrative of Yajnavalkya's renunciation of house-holder's life reveals strongly the inadequacy and futility of wealth for spiritual salvation, understood here as immortal being[22] Yajnavalkya proposed on this occasion, a division of his wealth between his two wives Upon this Maitreyi, who was less materialistic and more spiritualistic among his two wives, asked, "My lord can I attain immorality by wealth ?" Upon this Yajnavalkya replied, 'No', immortality cannot be attained by wealth. With this wealth, your life will be like the life of a person with material means, i e. it will be physically happy but spiritually deficient. Upon this Maitreyi said, "Then, what shall I do with this wealth Kindly instruct me about the way of immortal being" Upon this Yajnavalkya proceeded to instruct Maitreyi in spiritual secrets of life.

This narrative reveals the limitation and futility of wealth according to Yajnavalkya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad It reminds us of the narrative of Nachiketas contained in the Katha Upanishad Nachiketas also wanted to know from Yama the secret o immortal life. As son of a sage he himself expressed to Yama the limitation and futility of wealth. But he admired the utility and actual value of wealth in life which he wittily expressed in his dialogue with Yama. In case of Yajnavalkya also, his recognition of the utility of wealth as a necessary

22 अमृतत्वस्य ना शास्ति वित्तेन । बृह० उप० ४-५-३

means of life is evident in his earlier acquisitions of wealth and his later continuance to accept gifts of wealth from king Janaka.

The tale of a cynical saint named Raikva contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad also affords an evidence of the recognition of economic value in the Upanishads As the Greek philosopher Diogenes lived in a tub, Raikva lived in a cart Diogenes is reported to have snubbed Alexander the Great Raikva also snubbed king Janashruti in a similar manner Janashruti was a philosophic king like Janaka. He was bounteous in his charity He used to offer abundant money and food in charity. Raikva was a cynical saint, probably a Shudra, of Upanishadic times King Janashruti heard of his fame from royal cranes flying over his palace Impressed by his fame, he sent his attendants to search him After long search they found Raikva sitting under his cart and scratching his body King Janashruti came to him and offered him six hundred cows, a necklace and a cariot and asked him to instruct him about the deity whom he (Raikva) worshipped Raikva refused these offerings with his characteristic cynicism Then the king offered him a thousand cows and much more money along with his daughter Upon this Raikva agreed to instruct the king, chiefly by the offer of increased wealth, though he was moved by the offer of kings daughter as spouse

This tale of Raikva also affirms the recognition of secular values including wealth and sex on the part of Upanishadic sages, like Yajnavalkya It confirms the economic view of Yajnavalkya who was the greatest sage of Upanishadic times With all his cynicism, Raikva was moved by king's offer of increased wealth and his daughter Shankara has interpreted the face of the princess as a symbol of learning The king also gifted those villages to Raikva in which he used to live or roam Shankara has pointed in passing that Raikva instructed the king who offered him wealth Shankara's remark also recognises the relation between wealth and Raikva's inclining to instruct the king That the cynical sage appreciated wealth is evident from the anecdote. He is also reported to have accepted the estate offered to him by the king

The anecdote of Raikva also confirms the recognition of economic value in the Upanishad King Janaka also was fond of holding philosophical symposia in his court and of giving wealth to learned sages participating in them It shows the interest of sages in wealth, though it might be only for needs of living. It cannot prove the lust for wealth on the part of Upanishadic sages. But it does prove that they recognised the value of wealth at least as a means of living. Their voluntary participation in profitable assemblies in courts and willing acceptance of wealth offered indicates their due appreciation of the value of wealth Some stories, like that of Ushasti Chakrayana, also confirm more anxious appreciation of the value of wealth on account of urgency caused by greater scarcity of means in life.

It was customary for kings of ancient India to offer wealth in charity to sages who lived in forests and devoted themselves to spiritual pursuit. They were considered to be a liability of kings for maintenance and protection. Kalidasa has confirmed this royal responsibility through an utterance of Sita at the time of her banishment[23] Kings used to visit their hermitages to see that they were well-provided Janaka as a philosophic king devised a more intellectual way of giving wealth to sages This philanthrophy of ancient Indian kings was a mode of economic adjustment according to the division of duties in Indian society. Sages and Brahmins devoted to spiritual and intellectual pursuit They were relieved of the duty to earn living, so that they could wholly devote themselves to spirituality and learning. This economic adjustment promoted learning in ancient India. No other ancient country can pride like India in a whole class of people which devoted exclusively to spiritual and intellectual quest. What is specially to be noted about this unique Indian tradition is that this enlightened class of ancient India sincerely and seriously devoted itself wholly to spiritual and intellectual

23 तपस्वि सामान्यमवेक्षणीया । रघवश

quest It lived for this quest and lived on the honour it received in the society which treated spiritual and intellectual value with great regard Such a pursuit cannot be possible with greed and wealth. The ancient Indian sages and Brahmins lived a simple life of contentment The charities of kings, and other people show only their bounteous nature and do not prove the greed of the receivers Greed developed only in priests who were concerned with religious rituals but not in sages who devoted to spirituality and not in scholars who devoted to learning Numerous saints and scholars lived in modern times whose austerity and disregard of wealth disproves all accusations of greed so far as they are concerned The cynicism of Raikva also is an example of austere saintly life. The acceptance of wealth from kings by sages does not prove their greed for wealth, but only their recognition of wealth as a necessary means of life. Prevalence of mendicancy in India also proves that wealth was recognised only as a means of living by pursuers of spirituality Besides charity they lived on natural food, fruit and unsowed corn. They also picked grain from fields, which was left over by farmers

All this proves the moderate economic view of Upanishadic sages which is according to the injunction about spiritualization of secular values by contentment and abandonment of greed. This view presents a restricted and qualified recognition of economic value which is consonant with ultimately spiritual view of life

The tale of Ushasti Chakrayana elucidates the recognition of secular values, particularly of food and wealth, as a necessity the urgency of which is keenly realized in the circumstances of starvation and scarcity It is contained in the first chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad and is thus prior to the tales of Raikva and Yajnavalkya, even as secular values as urgent necessities are prior to secular values as means for higher values Sage Ushasti lived in misery with his young wife. He was starving because the region in which he lived was struck by hail-storm and

the crops there were destroyed On the point of starvation he begged of food from an elephant keeper He gave him some of the boiled pulses which he himself was eating The elephant keeper hesitated to offer him such a thing due to cultural considerations But Ushasti accepted those pulses because he thought he could not live without them and save his life. After eating those pulses Ushasti planned to go to a king who was organising a grand sacrificial ceremony Ushasti expected that the king would appoint him as the chief priest and he would get some money for it Ushasti over-whelmed all other priests by the excellence of learning and was chosen as the high priest by the king Ushasti agreed to it on the condition that king would give as much money as he would give to all other priests combined

This anecdote of Ushasti indicates the point at which scarcity and starvation generate a little greed also even in a saintly person Except for the keenness for food and money created by scarcity and starvation Ushasti's expectation of money in gift from king is not basically different from the attitude of Yajnavalkya and other sages who used to attend spiritual symposia in the court of king Janaka for gifts of wealth.

The tales of Yajnavalkya, Raikva and Ushasti all found in the Chhandogya Upanishad elucidate the recognition and appreciation of economic value in different situations of lives of the sages They substantiate the positive view of Upanishads according to which economic value has its moderate place even in saintly life and is consonant with the spiritual ideal of life

The Chhandogya Upanishad contains in its first chapter—a worship according to seasons by which one obtains enjoyments in life according to various seasons. One who worships cattle obtains ample cattle-wealth

But all these economic inclinations of sages of the Upanishads are not inspired by greed for wealth and lust for material

luxuries of life They are motivated only by their simple recognition of wealth and food as a necessary means of living for spiritual pursuit. They sought only a little wealth with an attitude of contentment, and often with an attitude of austerity and contempt only for making life and their spiritual pursuit possible The principle of contentment and spiritualization of mundane means which is explicitly stated in the very first verse of Isha Upanishad was implicitly implied in the economic approach of all sages of the Upanishads This can be the only sensible economic approach which is consonant with a dominantly spiritual view of life like the one contained in the Upanishads It is also the most sensible approach for mankind at all times, if it appreciates spiritual salvation as its highest end Such an end can be attainable only by restricting material ambitions and adopting moderation and contentment as the condition of advancement towards spiritual goal of life in which alone life can find its highest and final fulfilment

There is no indication in all these anecdotes of Upanishadic sages of condemnation of wealth or economic value as an unreality of illusion The sages who accept wealth from kings do not covet it, but neither do they seem to regard it as an unreality or an illusion It is only in the context of excessive temptation of wealth that 'maya' came to be used as a synonym for wealth in popular parlance Wealth as tempting 'maya' does not, in fact, means unreality but an axiological illusion in which it is over appreciated by a wrong valuation of life. The moderate economic attitude of Upanishads recognises the actual importance of wealth as a means of life and instructs to transcend temptations of earthly luxuries in order to advance towards the higher spiritual goal of life in which mundane wealth will be integrated with spiritual value and will be thus transformed into a divine gift of bounteous supreme spirit which is also the supreme reality Such spiritual integration of wealth will express itself in economic and social justice free from aggrandisement and exploitation which can be regarded as the highest economic ideal of a civilised and highly human society.



## CHAPTER—IX

# PLACE OF SEX IN THE UPANISHADS

Sex is a fundamental and natural phenomenon of animal as well as human life. It is a most mysterious, mystical and miraculous principle of life. How it has come into being is a great miracle and mystery of evolution. Metaphysically it is understood to be a most original and most wonderful expression of reality. Whether sex is an evolution in the physical universe or it is an expression of metaphysical reality, it is a highly mysterious and meaningful principle, particularly of human life. The mystery of sex consists in difficulties of understanding and appreciating its fuller significance in life. Sexual function particularly in its form of intimate copulation, is an inscrutable, integral and intimate experience which is inexpressible due to its deep mysticism, and higher significances of which in human life are immeasurable in scope Normally it is experienced and enjoyed in its crude and partial biological form which is common to animals and men. Perhaps men do not generally enjoy it in that biological vigour and vitality in which animals still continue to do it after millions of years of their unprogressive evolution. In the life of animals, perhaps, sex marks the climax of biological evolution, and constitutes the highest delight of their life. But the course of civilization has evolved numerous factors in human life which are detrimental to the fullest biological enjoyment of sex and also for realizing its higher cultural significances.

However sex is yet a great pleasure in life and is cardinal principle of human life and civilization. Biologically it is a principle of pleasure and of progeny. Psychologically sex is the foundation of all palaces of pleasure which man has erected during the long course of civilization. It is the source of the existence of human race, which is perpetuated by the principle of generation implied in sexual function. Culturally sex can be

immensely enriched and elevated to celestial heights and become a source of divine delight and complex fulfilment of human life which has immense possibilities, unlike animal life which is highly limited in its purpose and fulfilment.

As a biological creature every man comes into existence as a consequence of mating by two persons belonging to opposite sexes And in his or her turn almost every human being is inevitably attracted to indulge in and to enjoy sexual functions after attaining adolscence. Larger majority of mankind not only enjoys sex but expresses appreciation and even fascination of it in various forms of life, art and literature But strangely enough religious leadership, particularly Indian and Christian, has condemned sex and preached abstinence from it which seems actually impossible. Some sects of these religions have preached puritanism bordering on extreme asceticism. Abstenance from sexual pleasure is termed as celebac,y, which curiously enough is not understandable without involving its violation However it is a strange phenomenon and fact of human history that some persons born of mating have decried sex vehemently and advised people to abstain from sex completely Some of them like the Buddha renounced household and sex after marriage But some like the Christ did it before and without marriage Sex has been condemned by them as profane and sinful Senses are accused as tempters of man. They delude man into sinful paths of life which take away man from his divine destiny The ascetic condemnation of sex is extreme and absolute It has been regarded with sacred awe by common people though they neither understand nor observe it Moderation and contentment, not only in sex but in other aspects of sensory life, is not only understandable but appreciable. It is necessary for wholesome human life and for higher cultural attainments But extreme ascetics are not content with contentment and moderation They advise complete abstenance from sex and even condemn family as futile and even as obstructive in salvation The Kantian fallacy of absolute cele-

bacy was perhaps not contemplated by them, but it is to be seriously considered in this context.

Sexual asceticism has been prevalent in Indian tradition at least as a creed and gospel Later works of Indian religion are full of it. Numerous sects and successions of saints have harped on the monotone of celebacy and aversion to sex. Extreme asceticism became an epidemic in India after the renunciation of the Buddha and Mahavir, though traces of it can be found in earlier gospels also e g. in the belated renunciation of Yajnavalkya in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, and in the condemnation of family in the same Upanishad.[1] It is a curious sociological phenomenon as to how any people, particularly people of a temperate country like India, came about to preach and regard sexual asceticism as a sacred doctrine. It needs to be investigated seriously The turn to sexual asceticism is particularly strange in India which finds the beginnings of its culture in the Vedic traditions of buoyant worldly life with a wholesome bio-cultural attitude towards secular and sensory enjoyments of life

Between the Vedas and the Buddha some traces of mild ascetism can be discovered in the Upanishads. This mild asceticism seems to be expedient in the simple forest life of the sages and is quite consonant with their spiritual pursuit Statements which assert asceticism in any considerable degree are scarce in the Upanishads The general tone of the Upanishads is not ascetic but quite normal and moderate about sex and other secular values, though it is not in the least epicurean or hedonic So far as the Upanishads are concerned their attitude towards sex is quite normal, moderate and wholesome Except for the dominance of spiritual purpose of life, the secular and sexual philosophy of Upanishads seems to be in tune with the buoyant bio-cultural view of life of the Rigveda.

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1 कि प्रजया वा करिष्यामः , बृह० उप० ४-४-२२

Asceticism and celebacy in India and elsewhere is a gospel of some abnormal individuals who acquired religious leadership of normal people by an astounding but impossible doctrine which was morally intimidating to common man The initiation of asceticism is surprising and still more surprising is the credence and credit that was accorded to it by people Islam is the only religion which was not snared into this abnormality though it tended to err on the opposite side Zorastrianism and Confucianism are perhaps more normal on this point of sensory and sexual life

The Upanishadic view of sexual life is also quite normal and wholesome, except for some exceptional ascetic statements According to this view there is nothing sinful about sex The Upanishadic sages recognise it as natural and normal feature of life They are as innocently positive about sex as are the sages of Rigveda The view about the Upanishads which holds them to be unworldly and other-worldly will be dispelled when one notes the treatment of sex found in some of the old and important Upanishads The married and normally domestic life of most of the sages of the Upanishads also confirms the normal and moderate attitude of Upanishads about sex

Almost all the sages of the Upanishads are married persons living in forest hermitages with their wives There are a few exceptions like the cynical Raikva who lived perhaps a mobile life in a cart He does not seem to have a wive But the manner of his living was so clumsy and even dirty that no one would like to give his daughter to him to live in such secular misery Even such a cynical sage is pursuaded to accept the daughter of king Janashruti as a gift for imparting spiritual knowledge The appeal of sex to the sage is evident, though the wisdom of the king in offering his daughter to such a cynical person and for such dubious knowledge is extremely objectionable. About sages like Pippalada of the Prashna Upanishad, it is not clear whether they had a family or not That there is no obvious

context of their family is not enough to prove that they had none As most of the sages of the Upanishad had a family the likelihood in such cases also is that they had a family.

There is evidence in the Upanishads that most of the sages of the Upanishads had a family. The Isha, Kena, Mandukya and the Aitareya Upanishads are small in size They contain only substance of the teaching of sages whose names are not known The Mundaka Upanishad is ascetic in spirit and has no mention of the name of any sage or his family. But the remaining Upanishads have copious evidence of the domestic life of sages Though the Katha Upanishad is considerably critical of sensory and empirical values of life, yet its setting is the domestic background of sage Uddalaka. He had a family and a son, Nachiketas by name, who is the hero of the narrative contained in this Upanishad Uddalaka performed a sacrifice and gave cows in charity to Brahmins, which indicates the domestic and secular setting of his life The name of Pippalada (meaning one who lived on the fruit of ficus) the sage of the Prashna Upanishad indicates that he was a wandering ascetic but the sages who come to him to inquire about some spiritual facts appear to be belonging to families Their names are suffixed by domestic derivations. Katyayana, Ashwalayana etc. are titles derived from their parents or forefathers

The Taittiriya Upanishad contains a narrative of Varuna and his son Bhrigu, both of whom devote to spiritual quest Fuller domestic constexts are found in the two bigger Upanishads called the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka. The Chhandogya Upanishad contains in its first chapter the story of Ushasti Chakrayana (i e son of Chakra) who had a very young wife, even in the starving condition in which we find him here. The story of Raikva the cynical sage who lived in a cart and who accepted king's daughter as his wife as a gift for imparting spiritual knowledge to the king is also found in the fourth chapter of Chhandogya Upanishad. Satyakama Jabala is described

in the Chhandogya Upanishad as living in his hermitage with a wife, who pursuaded him to impart knowledge to a deserving disciple[2] Yajnavalkya, the Chief sage of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, had two wives though in old age he proposed to renounce household.

Long geneologies of sages are contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, which prove that the sages of Upanishads were not lonely ascetics but they lived in forest hermitages with their wives. Living with their wives confirms that they did not subscribe to celebacy like later ascetic saints of post Buddhistic India, and believed in normal sex life in their conduct of life

Several statement and sections of the Upanishad confirm that the Upanishads uphold the valua of sex also in principle The most notable feature of the Upanishadic treatment of sex is that several statements of the Upanishads clearly recognise sex and sex-organs as the seat and centre of delight in life Common conduct does often elucidate the supreme and central importance of sex in life. Many persons' life is decisively influenced by sexual considerations Imperative importance of sex is revealed in the sexual excesses and violations of social, legal limitations enforced by civilization upon man The sexual aberrations of sages like Parashara and Vishwamitra prove the emphatic assertion of sex at the highest levels of moral enlightenment All these high-lights of sexual imperativeness are ignited by the flame of passion which also implies a deepest delight in life Sexual pleasure governs man's life with a clothed sublety which reflects lightly in man's common conduct and cultural aspirations

In addition to the recognition of the commonly realized hedonic value of sex, the Upanishads also reveal the metaphysical

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2 छा० उप० ४-१०-२

and spiritual correlation of sex with ultimate reality. Such an ascetic Upanishad as the Mundaka maintains that the sexual urge and sexual function and generation consequent upon it are ultimately inspired by the supreme spirit which is the ultimate reality.[3] The divinity of sex as a dimension of reality asserted in the Gita is also to be recalled in this context[4] This principle of the Mundaka Upanishad suggests the sanctity of sex and also enlightens the Indian ideal of elevation of sex to spiritual and divine altitudes which has been advised in the Isha Upanishads and which has been concretely exemplified in the myths of Shiva-Parvati, Ram-Sita, Radha-Krishna etc, in the popular Indian tradition and which has been deeply philosophised in the Tantra[4]

The metaphysical truth of sexual bifurcation of reality which in modern times has been emphasised by Oswald Spengler in his 'Decline of the West' was long long ago revealed by the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which contains an ancient Indian Genesis much anterior to that of the Bible. The Brihadaranyaka narrates symbolically how the Original Being which is called Prajapati, because he is the father of Mankind, felt unhappy when he was alone in the beginning of the creation. He could not enjoy himself because he was alone Enjoyment is a mutual or common function and phenomenon It is not possible in the state of solitude One cannot enjoy with himself. The child does it for a while but it does so only on the basis of ample mutual enjoyment which it has received earlier with its mother and other kins The yogi is said to enjoy with himself alone in the Bhagwadgita[5] but he also becomes able to attain this stage on the

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3 मु० उप० २-१-५

4 धर्माविरुद्धो कामोऽस्मि । गीता

प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्प. । गीता

5 आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्ट

basis of much mutual enjoyment which he has received earlier. Moreover it is a purely spiritual enjoyment not related with any secular schema of life. Concrete and living enjoyment which is a great truth of life, is not possible without implying duality which is basically sexual. No other duality is a source of such deep delight as sexual duality In no other phenomenon unity attains such intense and intimate integrality as is attained in sexual copulation Delight may be the ultimate essence of reality, but it is manifested in a schema in which duality attains an intimate unity, which is exemplified in life in sexual relationship both in physical and mental modes of life Such approach to concrete spiritual delight can make the spiritual truths of the Upanishadic Vedanta more understandable and also more realizable in life than the intellectual and ascetic approaches to it which dominate the history of the Vedanta

The symbolic myth contained in the very first chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, expresses the hedonic schema as the supreme mode of Original Being in which it manifested itself in the form of man and woman united in an intimate embrace[6] and which is analogous to the Shaiva concept of Ardhanarishwar in which Shiva and Parvati are represented as united into an integral being Then it separated into man and woman Later it multiplied itself into numerous bi-sexual species from elephant and horse to ants i e from the biggest to the tiniest creatures It is by virtue of sexual bifurcation that lowest creatures share in the delight of existence, merely through sex, though their mental faculties are very undeveloped. Man, with his highly developed mind, can enjoy through sexual schema the divine delight, which is the supreme nature of reality, with such intimate and intense and profound richness that he can approximate celestial altitudes and divine excellences in his earthly existence The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has used a sexual metaphor to describe the mystical excellence of the delight of

6 बृह० उप० १-४-३

spiritual realization. It is so absorbing according to the Upanishad, as is the experience of a couple united in an intimate embrace As the couple in embrace is so absorbed in delight of experience that they have no cognition of any outer or inner object, so also in spiritual experience a person loses all cognition of outer or inner objetsc The metaphor is not a mere poetic fancy but it reveals also the approximation of sexual joy to spiritual delight not only in intensity and intimacy but also in holiness, wholesomeness and divinity. The metaphor indicates the Upanishadic view of integration of sex with spiritual reality which forms the cardinal schema of salvation of human life It is a more normal, saner and safer mode of salvation through sex than the doubtful and dangerous methods adopted in the Tantric tradition.

Besides the spiritual source and secret of sexual delight and also its divine destiny, the Upanishads regard sex as the central source of all secular joys of life. This fact is clearly recognised in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad when it says that 'the sexual organ is the central seat of all other enjoyments of life.'[7] This statement is repeated in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.[8] The Prashna, Taittiriya and Kaushitaki Upanishads also confirm the hedonic importance of sex or sexual organs The Prashna Upanishad recognises the sexual organs to be the central instruments of enjoyment in life[9] It also regards supreme spirit as the ultimate source of all existence and activity. This also corroborates the original spirituality and ultimate divine destiny of sex which has been much vulgarised by common man and much condemned by ascetic saints who regard it as sinful besides being vulgar. The Taittiriya Upanishad also confirms the original spirituality and delightfulness of sex, besides the capability of generation[10]

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7 सर्वेषामानन्दानामुपस्थ एकायनम् । बृह० २-४-११

8 बृह० उप० ४-५-१२

9 उपस्थश्चानन्दयितव्यम् ॥ प्रश्न० उप० ४-८

10 प्रजातिमृतमानन्द इत्युपस्थे । तै० उप० ३-१०

The Kaushitaki Upanishad maintains that the supreme spirit inspires all activity of man and it inspires delight in sexual organs and activity[11] It further confirms this fact that sexual organ outstands as an instrument of generation and joy[12] The supreme intelligent spirit inspires the sexual organs and, as if, enjoys itself through sexual activity.[13]

The kinship of sexual joy with divine delight is expressed by a calculus in the Taittiriya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads. It is true that human joy of health, wealth and sex is regarded as inferior to delights of higher regions and infinitely lower than the joy of spiritual realization, yet it is treated as the basic unit for estimation of joy. The youthful joy which forms the unit in Taittiriya Upanishad must be the sexual joy. The joy of Gandharvas, gods and Indra also which is higher than human joy is known in mythological tradition to be primarily sexual The human joy considered as a unit for calculation in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is also primarily sexual The primacy of sexual joy in human life is recognised both in the Taittiriya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.[14] Sankara in his commentary has revealed the sexual character of human joy[15] Though he considers it to be only a small fraction of spiritual joy, yet it is enough to give it an axiological status that it is akin to it[16] Though it is only a ripple of the ocean of divine joy,[17] it is at least not en-

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11 कौ० उप० १-७

12 कौ० उप० ३-५

13 कौ० उप० ३-६

14 तै० उप० ३-१०, बृह० उप० २-४-११, ४-५-१२

15 बृह० भा० ४-३-३३ (यच्च काममुख लोके-स्मृति)

16 नार्हत्त षोडशी कलाम् । बृह० भा० ४-३-३३
लौकिकोप्यानन्दो ब्रह्मानन्दस्यव मात्रा । शा० भा० तै० २-८-४

17 उदवेरि व विप्रुप । बृह० भा० ४-३-३३
तै० भा० २-८-४

tirely estranged from it. It is true that human joy cannot be commensurate with spiritual joy[18] yet its kinship with the latter is a sufficient assurance for the elevation of the former to divine altitudes of excellence. The metaphysical kinship and practical commensurability of human joy with spiritual joy is supported by a crucial statement of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which maintains that all people live by a fragment of spiritual joy.[19] Though sexual joy is a ripple of the ocean of spiritual delight it belongs to the highest reality as its integral aspect It is one of the rays of the sun of reality which illumines the universe of existence but it is a ray which kindles the lamp of divine light in every home and can make it a shrine for the adoration of Supreme Divinity.

The Upanishads regard sex with a religious sanctity and have used the metaphor of sacrificial ritual for the act of copulation. This metaphor is to be found in the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads which have, in parts, a continuity with the earlier ritualistic Vedic tradition. Both the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads regard woman as the fiery sacrificial altar.[20] Shankara in his commentary explains the comparison of vagina to Vedi by indicating the similarty of vigina to fire in regard to redness which is expressed by the hairlessness of the interior of the vagina[21] The Chhandogya Upanishad treats copulation for generation as a religious sacrifice in which woman is to be taken as fire, male organ as the sacrificial fuel, vagina as flame. The delight of copulation is described as the sparks which issue from the sexual sacrifice of man in the vagina of woman.[22] The same metaphor is repeated in the Brihadara-

18 अत: पर्ं गणित निवृत्ति । बृह० भा० ४-३-३३

19 बृह० उप० ४-३-६२

20 योषा वाव अग्नि । छां० उप० ५-८-१

21 अलोमका हि योनिन्तरत: स्त्रीणाम् । बृह० १-४-६

22 छां० उप० ५-८-१

nyaka Upanishad,[23] except for one minor and finer difference that while the Chhandogya Upanishad regards Abhimantrana as the smoke in the context of fire sacrifice,[24] the Brihadaranyaka assimilates pubic hair to smoke,[25] which is indicative of a more concrete poetic observation

This comparison of copulation to sacrifice shows the sanctity with which Upanishads regards the sexual relationship and function of human life. It is consonant with the comparison of the ecstasy of spiritual realization with the embrace of sexually inspired couples, contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad[26] The normalcy, sanity and nobility of the Upanishadic view of sex is notable for its moral dignity in the statement of the Prashna Upanishad in which mating with one's own wife during night is regarded as tentamount to Brahmacharya[27] which has been wrongly equated with celebacy This statement is to be particularly noted by those who understand ascetic condemnation of sex as highest spiritualism and try to discover traces of it in the Upanishads also

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad contains in its concluding chapter a detailed account of copulation as a religious act That the greatest of the Upanishads should end with a sexual theme does not indicate any abhorence for sex in the Upanishads On the other hand it confirms the sanity and sanctity of their view of sex which is corroborated by several statements incorporated in this chapter of our treatise

The social, moral and religious duty to propagate progeny and the joy of having children (sons) and the dignity of the ex-

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23 वृह० उप० ६-२-१३

24 छा० ५-८-१,

25 वृह० उप० ६-२-१३

26 वृह० उप० ४-३-२१

27 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद् यद् रात्रौ रत्या सयुज्यन्ते प्रश्न उप १-१३

pectant mother are other sexual contexts found in the Upanishadic view of sex The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad describes the original urge of man to have wife and children as the necessary mode of completion of life. He finds his existence incomplete without them[28] There is unique complementariness in the opposite sexes The couple forms a real unit of biological existence which can be elevated to divine being It reminds us of the original character of cosmic being as a couple united into a single entity, which is depicted in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as the original creative mode of cosmic being into which cosmic being manifested itself and from which it bifurcated into dualities of biological beings

Marriage and family are considered to be necessary modes of social and cultural life in the Upanishadic tradition which is described in the historic convocation contained in the Taittiriya Upanishad. The disciples after completing their education are enjoined upon by the teacher to speak the truth, to conduct righteously and to continue their studies[29] Along with this they are asked to offer money to the teacher and also to marry and continue the progeny[30] Yajnavalkya might have proposed to renounce household after living with his two wives for a long time and there may be a lone statements in an Upanishad which finds family futile for spiritual fulfilment and condemns it for this reason,[31] Nachiketas may consider sensory and sexual life as a cause of wearing of energy,[32] but the injunction embodied in the convocation contained in the Taittiriya Upanishad represents the general attitude of the Upanishad attitude of the Upanishad tradition about sex, marriage and fa-

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28 अकृत्स्न एव तावन्मन्यते बृह० उप० १-४-१७

29 स्वाध्य य प्रवचनाभ्या न प्रमादितव्यम् । तै० उप० १-११

30 प्रजातन्तु मा व्यवच्छेत्सी । तै० उप० १-११

31 कि प्रजया वा करिष्याम । बृह० उप० ४-४-२२

32 सर्वेन्द्रियाणा जरयन्ति तेज· । कठ० उप० १-१-२६

mily It reflects normal and sane view of sex which, of course, is moderate and not an indulgent absorption in sexual enjoyment Such a view is quite consistent with the integration of life with spiritual principle according to the Isha Upanishad

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad contains in its second chapter reference to some forms of worship whereby one acquires excellent energy and energetic children,[33] and also does not suffer from cessation of progeny.[34] This confirms the desirability of marriage and of children also. The son is understood to be the very self of a person in the Kaushitaki Upanishads[35] and a source of great joy in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad[36] The joy of the birth of a son has become provervial in Indian tradition The jubilence of it can be observed in the celebrities which mark the ceremonies of child-birth particularly of the birth of a son in popular culture of India

The dignity and honour ascribed to an expectant mother in the Aitareya Upanishad marks the high-light of the sexual view of the Upanishads. This dignity and honour is consonant with the ceremonial and cultural regard given to the expectant mother in popular Indian tradition which embodies several jubilant ceremonies to be performed from conception to child birth The pregnant woman treats the foetus in her womb with great regard and care[37] She is to be treated in home with great honour and care[38] This regard of the Upanishads towards an expectant mother is a sign of the considerate and cultural attitude of Upanishads toward woman and sex It is in keeping with the Vedic

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33 बृह० उप० २-१-४

34 बृह० उप० २-१-५

35 आत्मा वै पुत्र नामासि । कौ० उप०

36 पुत्रो जायते इति आनन्द । बृह० उप० ४-१-६

37 सास्यैतमात्मानमत्रगत भावयति । ऐत० उप० २-१-२

38 सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति । ऐत० उप० २-१-३

tradition which glorifies woman and takes a most normal, sane and sound view of sex in life The popular culture of India with its several ceremonies associated with marriage and child-birth is a popular form of the Vedic tradition

Such a view of sex and marriage as is embodied in the Vedic tradition and is supported by Upanishads, particularly the Prashna, Mundaka, Aitareya, Taittiriya, Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka and Kaushitaki, and is observed in the popular tradition of Indian culture does not justify in the least any attribution of sexual asceticism to the Upanishads A lone statement in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which ends with a whole treatise on mating and which has much to support a normal view of sex, contains an exceptional view of some sage who declare the futility of marriage and family in these words "Those aspirants who sought the ultimate self renounced the world and adopted sannyasa They did not desire to have progeny They found it futile for their spiritual pursuit They transcended the common desire for progeny, wealth etc "[39] But this solitary statement cannot establish the general trend of the Upanishads to be ascetic in regard to sex, marriage and progeny when copious citations can be given from the Upanishads which present a concensus of normal sexual view embodied in the Upanishads The general sexual view of the Upanishads is normal, sane and sound, and it has been presented in this chapter with the support of these citations of the Upanishads There is not the slightest touch of puritan asceticism in these citations and the sexual view of Upanishads is supported by these Nor does this view favour luxury and indulgence in regard to wealth and sex The Upanishads propound a view of moderation and contentment both in regard to wealth and sex It is with such a view that spiritualization of sex and other sensory values can be possible for attaining salvation through a synthesis of the secular

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39 बृह० ४-४-२२

with the spiritual as prescribed in the Isha Upanishad Due to their normal attitude towards sex, the Upanishads have slipped into detailed descriptions of mating and loose statements like the one which enjoins upon a man not to disappoint any woman, who comes to his bed and desires intercourse with him[40] Such statements are not consonant with the moderate sexual life of sages of the Upanishads and the sound sexual view maintained by them generally

Sex is a mutual function between men and women Women are generally treated as a weaker sex Western tradition treats them as a fair sex But the ascetic tradition of saints condemns them as a calamny of man's fate They are described as tempters and enticers of man. The later Vedanta aligns woman to maya which is a principle of illusion There is only one statement in an Upanishad which looks at women with contempt In this statement a sage prays that he might not be born with damned sexual organ of woman i e in a female sex[41] This statement also does not so much regard woman as damnable as unfortunate and sexually ravished by man In several other statements woman is referred to with aesthetic appreciation The figures of fire for vagina and of likeness of embrace with spiritual ecstasy reflect sanctity of woman in the mind of the sages Women are described as deities of sex in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad[42] In a worship described in the Chhandogya Upanishad,[43] it is deemed to be a sign of fortune if one sees woman in a dream The Brihadaranyaka also describes the revelling of subconscious self with women in dreams[44]

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40 न काञ्चन काञ्चिदपि स्त्रिय स्वात्मतल्प प्राप्ता न परिहरेत् ।
छाँ० भा० २-१३-२

41 छा० उप० ८-१४-१

42 काम एव यस्यायतन .... तस्य का देवतेति स्त्रिय इति होवाच ।

43 छा० उप० ५-२-७

44 स्त्रीभि सह मोदमान । बृह० [illegible]-३-१३

These statements are not to be construed as licenses for sexual indulgence, but they cetainly indicate the aesthetic regard for woman in the Upanishads.

The sexual view of Upanishads is not inconsistent with Brahmacharya which is regarded as a great moral virtue and as a necessary part of spiritual discipline. Brahmacharya in its real sense signifies a spiritual attitude in life which implies a restraint of sensory urges and a transcendence of them in moral discipline. Celebacy is very inadequate rendering of it. It will certainly mean celebacy for young and unmarried disciples and aspirants. But in its wider sense it will apply to married persons and in their case it will mean moderate sexual enjoyment with one's wife, which is treated as being tentamount to Brahmacharya.[45] As the highest synthesis of sex and spirituality it will signify a spiritual transformation of sexual joy and its elevation to such divine altitudes that the sexual joy approximates most closely to spiritual delight. Such synthesis of sex and spirituality is symbolized in the mythological couples of Shiva-Parvati, Ram-Sita, Radha-Krishna etc., and is supported by the sexual metaphysics of the Upanishads, Gita and the Shaiva tradition.



45 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद् रात्री रत्या सयुज्यन्ते । प्रश्न उप० १-१३

CHAPTER—X

# VALUE OF ACTION IN THE UPANISHADS

Karma or Action is a highly important theme of Indian philosophy as reality is considered to be either transcendent of action or static in constrast to dynamics of action Shankara who is regarded as the greatest exponent of the Vedanta philosophy of the Upanishads has vehemently opposed the validity of action in the context of reality and liberation which is realization of reality and which according to Shankara is not attainable by action Even in his commentary on the Isha Upanishad and the Bhagvadgita both of which exhort man to an active lift, Shankara opposes the relevance of action to reality and confines it to the ignorant. Action according to him has only a secondary value as a moral discipline which is only indirectly conducive to liberation. It cannot be directly related to liberation. Liberation is not an event in time It is not a result or fruit of action which is a process in time It is above temporal and causal relations which are implied in action

But action is an evident fact and a natural form of life and existence. Life is naturally and inevitably active It is natural as its dynamics is incorporated into the very constitution of life and existence. All creatures and all cosmic bodies are moving constantly. They cannot remain inactive even for a moment. Inactivity is death and activity is life. The Bhagwadgita confirms the inevitability of action when it says that 'man cannot remain inactive even for a moment.'[1] Life is active by its nature and constitution Its dynamics is evident in observation and experience Prana which is the Sanskrit synonym for life or vital being confirms the dynamic character of life by its etymology 'An' which is the root from which 'Prana' is formed signifies movement and activity Therefore it is found to be common in

1 न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् । गीता

most of the verbal nouns like gamana, Shravana ashana, etc. 'Pra' as a prefix signifies excellence 'Prana' or living is a most excellent activity as it is constantly and most efficiently carried for the whole duration of a creature's existence which is considered to be his life.

Indian philosophy in general and the Upanishads and the *Gita in particular have considered deeply the importance*, implications and limitations of actions. They have also tried to conceive of a reality and a state of realization in which the limitations of action are transcended The immanence of action in life and transcendence of it in liberation are apparently conflicting situations of existence and thought. The conflict between them has created great difficulties and disputes in Indian thought. Attempts at reconciliation of this conflict vindicate bold visions of reality which are considered as laudable by some thinkers but which are also unconvincing to some others. Action is an evident fact of life. It is also inevitable. Nobody can abandon it But it is a great adventure of Indian genius to have recognised the deeper limitations of the merely dynamic dimension of life and to have visualized a reality which transcends these limitations and also to have contemplated the realization of such reality in life. The achievement of this venture is that it offers us a higher life endowed with higher values without negating the evident and inevitable dynamics of our life The virtue of this Indian venture consists in honestly and boldly recognising the simple truth of action in life ar with it in endeavouring to visualize a life or existence which is above the limitations of duration. The greatest problem in this venture is of contriving a synthesis, harmony or reconciliation between action and its transcendence. Shankara finds this problem insoluble. Hence he relegates action to a lower level of reality because he finds it irreconcilable with transcendent reality which belongs to a different order. The Gita has made a profound effort to synthesise these orders of reality and has been hailed as a great gospel for solving this great problem of life.

The Upanishads also make some indications towards the solution of this problem, though limitations of action have been more emphatically exposed in them The latter aspect of the Upanishadic thought has been treated as more authentic than the former by Shankara.

Shankara has highlighted those statements of the Upanishads which expose the limitations of actions Action is temporal It is a course in time It is the form of appearance and existence of things Things of the world are contigent They come into existence at a time. As they are not beginningless, they are not endless They appear at a time and perish at another time Their duration is limited in terms of time They are short-lived and perishable Even the whole universe is destroyed in the cosmic deluge. Human existence also is temporary It is a short duration between birth and death This human existence is dynamic in the sense that it is not static. It is moving on from birth to youth and from youth to old age and death It is in this mental progress that the movement of time is experienced more effectively Other movements also are observed by mind The idea and content of movement is also retained in mind It is in this mental recognition of movement that the Vedanta philosophy has found a footing for contemplating transcendence of time and for visualizing the reality above time

Human action also is a course in time. It is temporal and also temporary in the sense of being transitory. It is moving in time and with this movement it is turning the present into past This is the mode of destruction of things by time It is for this reason that time is said to be the great destroyer in the Gita[2] though it is also regarded as a dimension of divine reality. Indian mythology also regards destruction through time as a

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2 काल कलयतामहम् । गीता

dimension of divine reality. This dimension is represented by Shiva as Rudra and by Kali as the killing goddess. But action is the mode of life Man lives as an active being Even a small infant moves its hands and feet, cries and sucks milk. It breathes which is the basic vital activity. All his life man is occupied in activity, except for the time he sleeps which also is partly fraught with mental activity called dream And he breathes even in sleep Some activities of life are involuntary like breathing Other activities are voluntary and ethical for the reason of being motivated by will. Most of these willed activities of man are selfish though many of them can be regarded as altruistic also.

Another kind of activity which is to be considered in the context of Indian philosophy is the ritual activity which was popular among the Vedic times and is enjoined upon man by the Vedas The Vedas are treated as ritualistic scriptures of India though they are not entirely so Not only the Western critics but Indian Scholars also find them dominantly ritualistic. Jaimini in his Mimansasutra argues that the Veda is primarily ritualistic Non-injunctive statements are secondary in it The Upanishads also have criticised the ritualism of the Vedas Shankara has started his commentary on almost every Upanishad with a clear demarcation of the philosophical Upanishads from the ritualistic Veda and with a condemnation of the latter as concerning the ignorant This ritual activity of the Vedas was intended for securing worldly and other-worldly goods for man The Vedic Indian prayed to gods for food, wealth and children. They performed sacrifices for these worldly gains and also for securing heaven in after-life The Upanishads mark a reaction against these ritualistic activities and Gita attempts a synthesis of action with transcendent reality which was discovered by the Upanishads

Axiological importance and limitations of all these kinds of activity are to be deeply considered The emphasis in phi-

losophical discussions particularly of Shankara, has been on the ritual actions but other actions are not different in kind They are all done in time and fraught with its limitations. They are all motivated by desires which are dominantly selfish. They are also fraught with egoism The performer of actions regards himself as the agent of actions He considers himself as the doer and also enjoyer of their fruit These are the attributes of action which are commonly applicable to ordinary and ritual actions as well. Even the moral actions regarded as good are not free from these attributes It is in regard to these attributes that the Upanishads and Shankara condemn actions and criticise them as inadequate for salvation which consists in realization of the transcendent and timeless spiritual reality. Even morally good actions imply the egoism of agentship of the performer All selfish and egoistic actions motivated by desire for fruit bind the doer to the cycle of transmigration and thus hamper his liberation. Actions are temperal and produce only transitory results. Hence they cannot lead to eternal spiritual beatitude

These limitations of actions are indicated in Upanishads at several places The egoism of actions is not so strongly exposed in the Upanishads as in the Gita[3] But the ephemerality of the fruit of action is pointed out in the Katha and the Mundaka Upanishads The Katha Upanishad says that the objects of the world which are the fruit of actions are transitory, those who covet them are bound by the meshes of death spread all round in life Only the wise who know the eternal spiritual end of immorality do not covet them[4] The Mundaka Upanishad considers the Vedic ritualistic sacrifices to be like feeble and unstable boats for crossing the ocean of life Those who regard them as good suffer from ignorance and they are bound to the cycle

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3 ग्रहकार विमूढात्मा कर्त्ताहमिति न्यते । गीता

4 कठ० उप० २-१-२

of senility and death.[5] Those who devote to actions motivated by desire do not understand their real good due to attachment to fruit.[6] They do not understand that the eternal spiritual good cannot be attained by actions which are transitory due to their temporal nature and temporary fruit.[7] Wise men realize the transitoriness of the regions which are attained by ritual actions and become disillusioned. They approach a spiritual teacher humbly with sacrificial fuel in order to be instructed about the imperishable spiritual reality.[8] The Chhandogya Upanishad declares the perishability of the regions which are attained by good actions and sacrifices.[9] Those who perform good actions get noble birth in next life and those who perform evil actions lower birth in next life.[10] But the regions attained by actions are temporary sojourn of life. They are not eternal abodes of spirit in immortal beatitude. One who is involved in actions, however good, roams in the cycles of births and death and experiences all the joys and sufferings of life.

These limitations of actions have been exposed by the Upanishads and have been emphasised by Shankara on the basis of them. The Upanishad condemn rather than commend ritual actions because the Upanishads seek the eternal spiritual reality which cannot be attained by actions. But they do not ignore the simple fact of action in life and try to reconcile it with the spiritual goal of life. Even if the actions are inadequate to spiritual realization, they cannot be abandoned in life, as the

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5 मुं० उप० १-२-७

6 मुं० उप० १-२-६

7 मुं० उप० १-२-९

8 नास्त्यकृत. कृतेन । मु० १-२-१२

9 तद्यथेह कर्म जितो लोक क्षीयते एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यजितो लोक क्षीयते ।
छा० उप० ८-१-६

10 रमणीयचरणा रमणीयां योनिमापद्यन्ते ।
कपूयचरणा कपूया योनिमापद्यरेन् ।

Gita maintains The only recourse between the inevitability of actions and the ideal of a spiritual goal is spiritualization of actions such as has been indicated in the Isha Upanishad in its beginning and as has been more thoroughly worked out in the Bhagwadgita The Isha Upanishad enjoins upon us to devote to action all our life and wish to live an active life of hundred years[11] If we perform actions in consonance with the spiritual attitude to life as indicated in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad we will not suffer from the limitations implied in the nature of actions[12] As the Shwetashwatara Upanishad explains, "those who devote to good actions and integrate them with divine spirit and dedicate them to the supreme being, they ultimately attain the realization of supreme being"[13]

The Isha Upanishad considers the synthesis of actions of actions with spiritual pursuit as necessary for balanced view of life Actions are no doubt rooted in ignorance as they are concerned with external objects Those who devote to actions exclusively are in darkness about reality. But those who devote to the pursuit of spiritual knowledge exclusively are believed to be in still deeper darkness by the Isha Upanishad[14] The Upanishads have not explained the principle of synthesis of action with spirituality, but there are several statements about the dynamic nature of spiritual reality which can provide us with a principle of explanation Shankara finds the two opposed to each other in nature[15] Action is temporal and moving Movement involves mutation of things Spiritual reality is eternal and immutable It is also said to be static i e immobile[16] Immutability has often been understood to imply staticness of

11 कुर्व्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शत समा । ईश २
12 एव त्वयि नान्यथेतोस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे । ईश २
13 श्वे० उप० ६-४
14 ततो भूय इव ते तमो ये उ विद्यायां रता । ईश ६
15 ज्ञानकर्मणो विरोध पर्वत वदकम्प । गीता भाष्य
16 अचल प्रतिष्ठम्

spiritual reality though it is wrong to take it so merly in contrast from mutable mundane modes of existence. It is more correct to understand spiritual reality as transcendent of time and temporal process In view of this transcendence, activity can be more coherently reconciled with spiritual reality

The principles of reconciliation of action with spirituality are found in several statements of the Upanishads The original and fundamental principle of this reconciliation consists in the dynamic character of spiritual reality, which is expressely maintained in the Isha and the Katha Upanishads and which exposes the error in regarding spiritual reality as static. The Isha Upanishad makes an apparently contradictory statement about the ultimate spiritual reality that it moves and it does not move.[17] It is to be noted that in this statement the dynamic nature of reality is asserted first and the transcendent nature is stated after it This does not however imply that mobility is closer to reality than transcendence. Transcendence must be the supreme character of reality The priority of mobility in the statement signifies only that it is not an unimportant character of reality, that mobility is a real character of reality and integrally belongs to it, that mobility is not an illusion or falsity as it is taken to be in the later Advaita which followed upon Shankara The transcendent character of ultimate spiritual reality signifies that though capable of movement at infinite speed, it is not affected by it and does not suffer mutation on account of it It also signifies that the dynamics of spirit is not limited by mathematical and natural laws of speed. It is an indefinite dynamics which transcends all natural laws of speed and motion It is not commensurate with any natural speed As the Isha Upanishad reveals, it seems to be immobile as its movement does not involve locomotion It seems to be immobile yet it moves faster than the mind. It exceeds in speed all the moving things—things moving as the higest natural speed

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17 तदेजति तन्नेजति । ईश उप० ५

e g light, yet it seems to remain static and unmoved[18] The Katha Upanishad, confirms this uniqut dynamics of spiritual reality It says much in the strain of the Isha Upanishad that the supreme spiritual reality moves far while it remains sitting (i e. static) and it moves everywhere while it remains sleeping i e lying[19] The apparently contradictory characters of motion and staticness are coherent dimensions of reality. This coherence can be understood better if natural staticness is not attributed to reality and in place of it transcendence (of motion also along with other empirical modes) is understood as the supreme character of reality This transcendence is not a negation of immanent mobility and dynamics as integral dimension of reality In fact the very idea of staticness is an illusion There is nothing strictly static in the universe What is taken as static is relatively so in relation of something else which is mobile in a more complex form A thing which is taken as static on earth in relation to a thing which is moving is also moving along with the earth The dynamic dimension of ultimate reality has not been keenly considered by followers of the Vedanta though it has been clearly stated in the Upanishads The Integratiaon of dynamic dimension with reality is more fully and clearly maintained in the Shaiva-philosophy in which Shiva and Shakti represent the transcendent and dynamic dimensions of reality Integration of dynamics with transcendence is symbolised in the trance and dance of Shiva, i e in his Samadhi and Tandava or Lasya The dynamic dimension of reality is even more honoured in Shaivism, though it is not regarded as the exclusive nature of reality as it is done in Buddhism which denies any transcendent reality

Dynamic dimension of reality reflects in the mobility of the universe Human and moral action is understood to imply will Supreme spiritual reality is also understood, in the Upa-

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18 तद्धावतोऽन्या नत्येति तिष्ठन् । ईश उप० ४

19 आसीनो दूर व्रजति शयानो याति सर्वत । क० उ०० १-२-२

nishad, to be endowed with will. It is divine will of which partakes all movement in the universe and all action in life. But divine or spiritural will is understood to be different from human will by Shankara.[20] He has not explained the points of difference. But we can imagine them to be conflict, deliberation, egoism etc. which characterise human will and which cannot be ascribed to spiritual reality. Spiritual will is the spontaneous dynamics of reality. Several Upanishads cônfirm the volition of Supreme Being. The Chhandogya Upanishad states that 'the ultimate being willed to multiply itself and become many.'[21] The Prashna Upanishad also refers to the will of spirit within man.[22] The Aitareya Upanishads makes a mention of cosmic will of the Supreme Being in the very opening verse of it, 'that He willed to create the worlds.[23] It also affirms the creation of governers of the universe by the divine will.[24] The spiritual will is analogous to the Power of Shiva adored as Divine will and called Ichcha Shakti in Shaiva philosophy. This spiritual will is regarded as the natural character of supreme spiritual reality in the Shwetashvatara Upanishad,[25] i.e. it is spontaneous spiritual will and not deliberated will like human will. The human will is involved in action besides being deliberated. The spirit is the transcendent reality. It can effect creation, motion action etc. without being involved in it and without being affected by it. As Shankara has explained, 'The spirit effects creation by virtue of its mere being and without being involved in activity.[26]

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20 प्राकृतसकल्प विलक्षणत्वात् । ब्रह्मसूत्र शाकर भाष्य

21 तदैक्षत एकोऽहं बहु स्या प्रजायेयेति । छा० उप० ६-२-३

22 स ईक्षाचक्रे । प्रश्न० उप० ६-३

23 स ईक्षत लोकन्नु सृजा इति । ऐत उपप १-१-१

24 ऐत० उप० १-१-३

25 परास्त शक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते,
स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च । छां० उप० ६-८

26 आत्मन सत्तामात्रेण कर्तृत्व न व्यापृततया । छां० उप० भा० ८-१२-५

Besides possessing dynamics as its integral dimension, the supreme spiritual reality also inspires empirical activities of man The Kena Upanishad regards spirit as the ultimate source of the activity of life and senses[27] According to Brihadaranyaka, vital being, eyes etc. are the names of the dynamic modes of supreme spirit[28] The Katha Upanishad considers spirit to be the ultimate support of life of man[29] The Brihadaranyaka believes that all creatures live by a fraction of the Blissful being of spiritual reality.[30] Spirit is the non-dualistic reality and it can be observed that efficiency and excellence of human activity depends on the degree of non-duality that we attain and experience in our social life The Chhandogya Upanishad reveals that activity is invigorated by understanding and faith which are spiritual in character.[31] Though food sustains vital being and vital being supports body by assimilating food, ultimately it is the spirit that sustains the vital being, the body and the senses The spirit is called to Prana of Prana, the life of life, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear and so on[32] Though not affected by activity like things of nature, the spirit is the ultimate source of all activity in life and universe

The metaphysical integrality of ultimate spiritual reality with its dynamic dimension alone can explain movement in nature and activity in life On the other hand spiritualization of human will and action is the only solution of the incongruence of natural or interested action with spiritual salvation of

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27 केन उप० खण्ड—१

28 वृह० उप०

29 इतरेण तु जीवन्ति । कठ० उप० २-२-४

30 वृह० उप० ४-३-३२

31 यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धया उपनिपदा
तदेव वीर्यवत्तर भवति । छा० उप० १-१-१०

32 श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्र मनसो मनो यद्वाचोहवाच
न स प्राणस्य प्राण. । केन उप १-२

man. Cognitive intelligence may be opposed to action in nature as Shankara conceives but supreme spirit is not so. Dynamic dimension is integral to its being, as is affirmed by several Upanishadic statements, and it also inspires activity in universe and life The truth is that even interested and selfish or even evil action is not possible without some element of spiritual support in the life of a person One who is extremely devoid of non-dualistic spiritual support in his life will be a lunatic of such a lofty degree that he will be scarcely capable of any action worth the name He will be an automaton with the only difference from a stone that he will be living i.e breathing, eating, and having circulation of blood. But a will and an act which is more non-dualistic in nature i.e. more harmonious with the interest and happiness of others will be more spiritual Altruistic action or acts of common good are highly spiritual. As the Isha Upanishad intends, such action will be qualified by moderation, contentment, and restraint of senses and desire Such an action will exemplify what the Isha Upanishad calls the integration of divinity with the objects and acts of life.[33]

Spiritualized will and action will transcend the limitations of ego and individuality It will be spiritual only in and by this transcendence Acts of a mother for the good of the child and of saintly persons working for the good of people like Fathers who serve the lepers and the sick, are such actions They are acts in service of God Surrender of will and acts to God makes them spiritual and divine. Such a will is not individual as it is not selfish The individual becomes a servant or an instrument of God But this spiritual will is not identical with the rational will of Kant or the general will of Hegel which also is conceived rationally by him. Rational will of Kant is logical and Hegel conceived spirit as reason. Both are devoid of any relation or reference to emotion Spiritual will of Upanishads and the Gita implies a divine delight for one

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33 ईशावास्यमिद सर्वं । ईश उप० १

who acts and for those to whom the act concerns Delight is the essence of spirit and it is the delightfulness of will and actions which makes them spiritual and divine Delight is a transcendent dimension of experience It commensurates with the transcendent character of spirit It is in this delightful transcendence that the limitations of natural, interested and selfish actions are transcended and activity is reconciled with spiritual reality Shankara's insistence on their opposition is due to his exclusive emphasis on the transcendent character of spiritual reality confused with staticness But understood in the way explained above, the coherence of the two becomes quite intelligible and acceptable It is in this manner that the Upanishads, particularly the Isha Upanishad and the Bhagwadgita, *understand the spiritualization of activity and enjoin* upon man to devote to action all his life Such action alone can ensure salvation of man

It will be interesting and useful to consider the dynamic-cum-transcendent character of reality propounded in the Upanishads in the context of the two trends of philosophical thinking which exclusively emphasise either dynamic or static character of reality. Buddhism and Heracleitus in ancient times and Bergson and William James in modern times regard reality to be absolutely dynamic and changing Some of them find nothing which changes but consider mere change to be the reality Some absolutists like Hegel and Bradlay devalue change and regard reality as an absolute whole Such a reality is called a block-reality by critics Later Advaita came to emphasise, after Shankara, the static character of reality and to regard all activity and change as unreal Shankara and Bradley consider action, time, change and phenomena of the universe as appearances or unreality In fact exclusive emphasis on any one aspect of reality is to take a partial view of it Time and activity is only one dimension of reality Reality as a whole is multidimensional and transcendence is the final truth It is not to be confused with staticness which is an empirical illusion Im-

manent character of reality confirms the reality of activity and transcendence ensures overcoming of its limitations As both dynamics and transcendence are integral dimensions of reality, a harmony of them in spiritualization of will and action is possible as the highest ideal of human life and the supreme way of salvation of man.

It will also be interesting to evaluate this harmony of activity and transcendence in the context of modern life and civilization. Life is active by nature. Man is generally occupied with some activity. He may enjoy rest after work but often he becomes miserable without occupation. Hence most men keep occupied even in futile activity. Useless talking is one of them. Much of the activity of man is selfish. It is activity divorced from transcendence and spiritual reality. Hence it is not delightful even when it is pleasant Pleasure vanishes, delight endures. Perishability of pleasure makes the pursuit of pleasure an uncessing chase of a mirage. Thus common life becomes activity not intimately co-ordinated with transcendence and spirituality. Perhaps due to lack of transcendence and spirituality in the pattern of life, civilization also has been advancing in the direction of activity. Occupations have been increasing, speed of locomotives and air-crafts is being enhanced, Supersonic planes are plying in sky and space. Increase of speed is deemed as a mark of advancement of civilization. History and science are both moving fast. Urban life is particularly becoming busy and full of hurry. As Whitman remarked, 'we have no time to stand and stare.' People like to drive on wheels more than walking on foot. Higher speed is a sign of higher civilization.

Now this is a onesided development of civilization in the direction of one dimension of reality which may be described as duration Speed and even higher speed and activity can be inspired by spiritual reality also. But such speed will be more delightful and less determinate. The spirit is said to be the fastest mover in the Isha Upanishad Whether fast or slow

CHAPTER—XI

# VALUE OF INTELLECT IN THE UPANISHADS

We have dealt among secular values mainly with bodily values in the previous chapters. Body, health, senses and vital being are the most physical among secular value. Food and wealth are also physical values and are mainly related to body Food sustains the body and vital being. Wealth can be useful for acquiring other necessities and luxuries of life which also are physical Sex also is a fundamental physical and bodily value though it has its higher aspects also which can be regarded as psychological, cultural and spiritual. The immediately previous chapter deals with the value of action. Action also is fundamentally physical like sex, though it has a mental and moral aspect in will.

So all these values which are dealtwith in the previous chapters are dominantly physical or pertain to body. Now in the present chapter we propose to deal with the value of intellect according to the Upanishads Intellect is a faculty of mind So intellect is mental and not so evidently a physical value It involves consciousness Even if intellect and mind are technically considered to be physical in Indian philosophical thought, they are mainly considered in relation to intelligence, consciousness and knowledge which belong to them Intellect is particularly the faculty of thought. In this respect it is to be distinguished from dominantly physical values like body food, sex, wealth etc.

So intellect is practically more mental than physical But intellect also is a secular value. Secular is not identical with physical Secular means that which is worldly and empirical. All that which is within the scope of common interest, approach

and experience is secular. Only that which is esoteric, mystical, occult, super-natural, religious or spiritual is to be regarded as non-secular All that is earthly is secular; what is transcendental is beyond it Hence intellect, though mental and conscious, is secular. It is earthly and natural in the sense that it is a faculty commonly possessed by almost every normal person It is a faculty of thought and knowledge. Every person develops it with age Intellect is not ably secular as a faculty but it is also secular in regard to its scope of apprehension. Intellect is the faculty of a subject for knowledge which pertains to objects The objects of intellectual knowledge also are secular, that is earthly or worldly They are objects which are accessible to common experience These objects are commonly recognised and accepted They are not esoteric, occult, or super-natural i e. objects which are not accessible to common understanding Intellect deals with physical objects as objects of knowledge and as well as with ideas of reason which also are common and communicable. Intellect should not meddle with transcental occult and spiritual phenomena like soul, religion, rebirth etc But human curiosity has pressed intellect to meddle with these phenomena Intellect has ventured in metaphysical thought also But in all its unwarranted ventures it has tried to act reasonably and be convincing to others Above all it has always been willing to be criticised and corrected. Intellect as a common faculity and thought of one person has been open to be examined by other persons

Thus both in regard to its subjective function in knowledge and also of its objective correlation, intellect is secular. It is the instrument of all knowledge All philosophy and science is the gift of intellect The seed of transcendental philosophies like that of the Upanishads might be in the vision or intuition of sages but the expounding of those philosophies also is intellectual. Language is intellectual in its character and composition So all that is expressed in language is intellectual. Even anti-intellectual philosophies like those of Bergson or Croce are expressed in intellectual language But as secular

and rational, language has its limits particularly in regard to intuitional, mystical; religious, spiritual and transcendental subjects. The Upanishads are treatises of spirituo-mystical philosophy of ancient India. It will be highly interesting and immensely enlightening to consider the value of intellect in and according to the Upanishads.

The Upanishads recognise intellect with all its virtues, but also with all its limitations in their approach to the spiritual reality which the Upanishad deem as ultimate. The Upanishads regard the ultimate spiritual reality as intelligent i.e. it is not inert or inanimate and unconscious like the dead matter. The Brahman is of the nature of Prajnana or excellent consciousness' says the Upanishad.[1] Consciousness is a form of intelligence, which distinguishes it from animate being which has its being entirely confined to itself and has no intelligent reaction towards anything. Intelligence in the form of cognition becomes conscious of an object and can reflectively be conscioous of itself also. In this reflection it becomes an object to itself. Brahman or the supreme spirit is intelligent being as it is not an inanimate object confined to its own ontological existence. It may also comprehend cognitive consciousness as a dimension. But it cannot be identified with cognitive consciousness or cognitive knowledge as its essential being. Cognitive consciousnes or cognitive knowledge is dualistic, as it involves a relation between a subject and an object Brahman [illegible] supreme spiritual reality is not dualistic but non-dualistic. It is integral being. Hence it cannot be identified with cognitive consciousness or cognitive knowledge. It can be deemed to be supre-conscious intelligence which is immediate and integral.

But it is a strange anomaly of the Vedanta philosophy that Brahman or Supreme Spiritual reality is often taken to be

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1 प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ।

conscious being or consciousness Shankara in his commentaries has often identified reality with consciousness though he is not unaware of the fact that consciousness is dualistic and spiritual rality is non-dualitic While arguing against Buddhistic denial of any identical subject he affirms the identity of self as an identical and persisting subject much like the transcendential self or the ever recurring 'I' of Kant Vachaspati Misra, a prominent follower of Shankara, has argued in the same vain that 'the self which remains identical and unchanged changing phenomena of knowledge is different and is to be distinguished from the latter,'[2] Dharmaraja Adhwarindra in his famous manual of the Vedanta titled as the Vedanta Paribhasa has identified Spiritual reality as consciousness, which according to it is of three kinds, subjective, objective and cognitive[3]

The term 'consciousness' is indiscriminately used for Brahman or the supreme spiritual reality. On the other hand it is also sought or inquired into as an object The 'Jijnasa' of Brahman with which the Brahma Sutras start implies Brahman as an object of inquiry This, of course, may be an inevitability of human situation in which Brahman is not known and is to be known more fully But the identification of Brahman with consciousness has caused great misunderstanding in the tradition of the Vedanta This has also resulted from an unwitting neglect of more important character of Brahman as Bliss Brahman is not merely and essentially cognitive consciousness which is dualistic but Blissful consciousness which is non-dualistic, immediate and integral But the Blissful character of Brahman is largely ignored and most of the discussion in later Vedanta centres round Brahman as consciousness The conflict with Samkhya view of creation from unconscious prakriti and

2 येपु व्यावर्त्यमानेपु यदपरिणतमवतिष्ठते तत्तेभ्यो भिन्नम् । भामती

3 त्रिविधं हि चैतन्यम् । विपय चैतन्यम्, विपयीचैतन्यम्, ज्ञानचैतन्यम ।
वेदान्तपरिभापा

with the Buddhistic denial of a subjective self has deluded Vedantic tradition into arguments for asserting a conscious self as creator and an identical subject of changing modes of cognition.

The cognitive consciousness is not the essential nature of spiritual being Its essence is Blissful consciousness which is integral and which can be deemed to be supra-consciousness. Cognitive consciousness can well be a dimension of supreme spirit. It has been recognised to be so definitely in the Mandukya Upanishad. The Mandukya Upanishad reveals four dimesions of the supreme spiritual reality,[4] of which the waking consciousness which is cognitive and objective is one[5] In the waking state of consciousness, it cognises external objects[6] The Upanishad also regards the supreme spirit as the ultimate source of objective cognition and so it also asserts that this spirit cannot be known as an object like other objects in any manner. The words of the Upanishad are to be carefully noted. It does not regard the spirit as the knower or the knowing subject It calls the spirit as the 'realizer' (Vijnata), by and through whom man cognises all objects. Man knows objects by virtue of the spirit. The spirit is not the knower but the supreme source of knowledge Knowledge and knower have frequently been used in the Gita also, particularly in connection with the path of knowledge. Often knowledge or Jnana has been used in place of integral spiritual knowledge which is not cognitive knowledge but blissful experience. Much confusion has resulted in the Vedanta philosophy by this dubious usage of Jnana.

Cognitive knowledge is objective and also intellectual. It is propositional and rational The Upanishadic denial of the possi-

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4 सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् । मां० उ० २

5 जागरितस्थानो बहिष्प्रज्ञः । मां० उ० ३

6 जागरित स्थानोबहिष्प्रज्ञः । मां० उ० ३

bility of realization of supreme spiritual reality by conscious and cognitive knowledge and by reason, is a sure indication of the fact that dualistic and cognitive consciousness is not the essence of spiritual reality, which is essentially integral blissful experience This denial of the Upanishad exposes the limitations of cognitive consciousness or cognitive knowledge or reason in regard to the realization of spiritual reality A crucial statement of the Kena Upanishad confirms strongly these limitations. It reveals a most profound and paradoxical truth of the Vedantic Spiritualism in a perplexingly paradoxical statement that 'the Brahman or the spiritual reality is unknown to those who (believe that they) know it and it is known to those who do not know it i e who have no pretentions about knowing it[7] Different words are used in the Sanskrit original for both the ideas for which we have used 'Know' in english rendering in both places Vijnana and Avijnana are used for knowledge (or experitnce) of Brahman or spiritual reality Vijanatam and Avijanatam are used for believing that one knows and does not know. Awareness and unawareness will perhaps be better renderings Awareness implies consciousness and signifies conscious knowledge which is of cognitive character and applies to knowledge of objects The same verse of the Kena Upanishad contains in its previous half that 'one who does not pretend that he apprehends it with mind (certainly experiences it in immediate and integral experience) and (is) entitled to apprehend it with mind and to have an opinion about it based on (actual experience) but one who believes that he apprehends it with mind and can make an opinion about it does not (really) know it i e does not actually apprehend it in experience[8]

This paradoxical statement of the Kena Upanishad reveals a profound truth of the Vedantic spiritualism. The supreme spiritual reality is not an object and it cannot be known as an

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7 अविज्ञातं विजान ताम् विज्ञातमविजानताम् । केन० उप० २-३

8 यस्यामतं तस्य मत मतं यस्य न वेद स । केन० उप० २-३

object of cognitive knowlege. It can be revealed only in immediate intimate and integral inner experience which is not so much knowledge as actual blissful being that is the nature of spiritual reality Confusion is created in philosophy and life by the neglect of the idea of bliss as the essence of spiritual reality and by the use of the wod 'Knowledge' for two different kinds of intelligent experiences i.e. both for cognitive knowledge of objects and for immediate, intimate and integral experience of spiritual Bliss or Divine Delight. The Kena and some other Upanishad also use two different words for these two fundamentally different intelligent experiences. 'Vijnana's is used for spiritual experience and 'Jnana' is used for cognitive knowledge of objects The former is immediate, intimate and integral in its gnostic character It transcends the dualistic plane of cognitive knowledge fraught with the duality of knowing subject and of the object known It also transcends 'awareness' which signifies reflective consciousness implying self-conscious Hence it is blissful experience Shankara in his commentaries has clearly confirmed the integrality of blissful experience and rejects the duality of subject and object in case of such blissful experience[9] As cognitive plane is the normal plane of human existence and understanding, we are prone to think and speak of transcendent spiritual experience also in terms of the former. All philosophy of spirit including treatises on Vedanta (Upanishads also) are fraught with this limitation or confusion, in so far as they are embodied in language which is cognitive, intellectual and rational hence dualistic. Perhaps such an anomaly is the necessary consequence of human situation which has been very aptly described in the Kena Upanishad in these words of a spiritual aspirant. 'I don't believe that I know the spiritual reality very well, nor do I believe that I do not know it at all, because I do know it slightly (I am not completely deprived of the glimpse of spirit in my life No one is so deprived) One who understands

9 आनन्दानन्दिनोरभेदात् । शाकरभाष्य

the meaning of this statement of mine, he alone has some apprehension of the unique nature of spiritual reality and its unique experience about which we can say that we do not know the spiritual reality and also know it."[10] But the Kena Upanishad has in a previous verse declared that 'any one who believes that he knows the spiritual reality too well, in fact knows it only too little, or we may say does not know it i e understand of character of spiritual reallity or has any experience of it[11] The Kena Upanishad states the actual situation of spiritual knowledge in life when it says that 'it is different from the known and at the same time it is above the unknown.'[12]

Cognitive consciousness or reflective awareness involving self-consciousness is the crux of the whole situation It is dualistic and objective It is the knowledge of an object by a subject who is capable of being self-conscious about the phenomenon of knowledge This self-consciousness is called 'anuvyavsaya' in schools of Indian philosophy. The object known and transformed into an idea constitutes the inner content of this cognitive consciousness. The subjective self has no character of its own in case of cognitive consciousness It is only a reflective point of reference to adjust the bipolarity of cognitive consciousness. The transcendental self of Kant also is such a characterless entity Its identity is deduced from the continuity and coherence of knowledge which is not in fact due to any hypothetical subjective identity but has its source in the transcendent endurance of the superconscious and blissful spirit which underlies all our experience, but which can neither be deduced from it nor can be reflectively suggested by it. This subjective entity can also be deemed as ego, i e individual consciousness, which also

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10 नाह् मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च । केन० उप० २-२

11 यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दभ्रमेवापि नून त्व वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपम् ।
केन० उप० २-१

12 अन्यदेव तद्विदितादविदितादधि । केन० उप० १-३

has no inner content of its own and subsists only as a point of reference in conscious knowledge and self-conscious reflection. Bliss or delight is the only original intrinsic and positive content of human experience. That is not individualistic, as it is non-dualistic. Ego implies a duality of egoes besides that of ego and the object A subtler duality is implied in its consciousness of itself i e in its own bifurcation into a subject and an object for itself

As objective cognitive consciousness or knowledge also involves an alienation of the object. The object is deemed as an 'other' by it and for it also. This alienation of the object is the basic cause of inner emptiness of the subjective self or ego. Alienation of object is empting of subjective self, inspite of illusory occupation of it by the content of ideas of objects Such occupation of subjective self by ideas of objects is illusory because it is temporary and has to be temporary so that room may be made in mind or the subjective self for admission of new ideas of new object It is this process of admission and evacuation of ideas in and from the mind which forms the phenomenon of cognitive knowledge. Knowledge will not be possible without this constant process of temporary illusion This illusion is enduring and constant in its general form but it is temporal and momentary in regard to particular objects, ideas of which constitute the content of consciousness at a moment of time. The cognitive knowledge is immediately bound with the present moment and is thus a process in time. The cognitive phenomenon is temporal in so far as it moves with time and is contained in the form of time. Its reference to past and future are extensions of it beyond its natural and logical limit which has been strictly defined only in metaphysical and logical atomism like that of Buddhism and Bertrand Russell If cognitive knowledge is analysed minutely the external object will be found to be nothing but a name for a conglomeration of discreet sensations jumbled in confusion and the subjective self will be found to be nothing except a collection of ideas. Strictly sensations are ato-

mic as Russell insists and momentary as Buddhism argues; and mental ideas also will be found to be momentary and indeterminable in regard to any specific character or content. Buddhistic nihilism is completely correct in regard to its analysis of cognitive objects and empirical self It errs only in its insistence on presenting this half-truth as the whole truth of existence and life It also commits an error of omission in ignoring the positive truth of life which has been revealed in the Upanishadic Vedanta as the supra-conscious, non-dualistic, immediate, intimate, integral Bliss and as the deeper reality of life and experience The cognition of object, its construction from atomic sensations as Russell suggests, the recollection of objects cognised in past and construction of a coherent knowledge by memory all these are supported by this transcendental Blissful Spiritual reality

Shankara, Kant and many other thinkers have been tempted to use the fact of memory as an argument to prove the enduring identity of a cognising subject But in fact it is not the empirical or individual self which endures It seems to endure by virtue of the transcendent Blissful spirit which is the only enduring reality It is behind all objective and subjective phenomena and sustains them Memory seems to be a continuity of knowledge and consciousness But in fact it is not so The only continuous reality is super-conscious and blissful spirit Memory is not continuity of consciousness but consciousness of continuity made possible by enduring superconscious blissful spirit underlying all experience In fact even present cognitive consciousness is not integral continuity. It is a successions of atoms of sensation or moments of cognition (Vijnanas of Buddhism) which are discreet and distinguishable from each other, much like the atomic elements of objects propounded in modern physics, and which are cognised into a continuity by virtue of the super-conscious blissful spirit which sustains and correlates them into coherent and continuous knowledge. Besides the quanta of field energy there is an infinite quantum of physical energy behind the electronic units which combine into the collective atomic structure of

from it along with mind without knowing it'[15] It is not only beyond senses and mind but it is also beyond intellect and learning The sense are designed by the creator to be extravert and look to objects outside[16] So the intellect, though not entirely extravert also deals with objects or ideas treated as object i e. alienated from the subject Hence intellect, reason and learning also are inadequate to apprehend the spiritual reality, which can be realized only in integral intimate, immediate experience In a verse which is commonly found in the Katha and the Mundaka Upanishads it is asserted that, 'the supreme spiritual reality cannot be obtained by intellectual instruction, intellect or by much learning'[17] The Katha Upanishad regards it as beyond the scope of reason and argument[18] It cannot be obtained by reason and argument[19] A Sutra in the Brahma Sutras based on this Upanishadic utterance also confirms this limitation of reason and argument[20] It also explains the reason why argument is not applicable to supreme spiritual reality and it is not accessible to reason The explanation given in the Brahma sutra is that reason is unfounded[21] It has no end It can be met by another argument by another person, as Bhartrihari points out[22] The practical limitation of it is that it is intellectual, dualistic, analytic and conscious The reasons why intellect and consciousness are inadequate to apprehend spiritual reality have been

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15 यतो वाच निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह

16 पराचि खानि व्यतृणत् स्वयभू । क० उप० २-१-१

17 नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्य न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
कठ० उप० १-२-२३, मु० उप० ३-२-३

18 अतकर्यमणुप्रमाणात् । क० उप० १-२-८

19 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । क० उप० १-२-९

20 तर्काप्रतिष्ठानात् । ब्रह्मसूत्र २

21 अप्रतिष्ठानात्

22 अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैरन्यथैवोपपाद्यते । भर्तृहरि

deeply and minutely considered above. The Katha Upanishad clearly declares the spirit to be beyond the intellect.[23]

That the integral spiritual reality and also experience of it is above and beyond intellect has been clearly confirmed in the Katha Upanishad. The ultimate spiritual experience has been described in the Katha Upanishad as a state of peace and beatitude in which the senses are completely composed along with mind and in which the intellect does not engage in its analytical activity.[24] It can be realized in a situation in which the intellect and intellectual knowledge is consecrated to the spirit.[25]

But with all the inadequacy of intellect for spiritual attainment, intellect is the highest intelligent instrument of man. All the advancement of civilization is due to intellect. Though intellect overacts and unduly dominates life yet intellect is the only recourse of man for understanding not only the empirical and rational things but also things which do not properly belong to its domain. Intellect enlightens us about art, culture religion, mysticism, occultism, spiritualism etc all of which are non-intellectual. Man's literature is full of intellectual treatises dealing with these subjects. With all his faith in God, man has also been trying to understand him. Difference of opinion is a character of intellect and reason. And treatises on these subjects mentioned above are full of diversity of opinion about every aspect of them. Philosophies, particularly metaphysics and the Vedanta, are examples of the venture of intellect in spheres out of bounds for it and of diversity of view about transcendential things. The Upanishads and the numerous works of the Vedanta exemplify the profuse (and also profound) endeavours of intellect in the super-intellectual realm of spiritual reality.

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23 बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः । कठ० उप० १-३-१२

24 बुद्धिर्न विचेष्टते । कठ० उप० २-३-१०

25 मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय । गीता

Intellect discovers the way to the realization of the spiritual reality

Much of the endeavour of intellect in the super-intellectual realm of spirit is unwarranted and unfruitful. It may even be tragically harmful according to the paradoxical statement of the Kena Upanishad that those who know it (intellectually) do not know it really[26] i e they do not attain it in actual integral experience The forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge has certainly led to the banishment of Adam's sons from the Eden garden of ignorance and also from the paradise of bliss and beatitude But it has also inspired his ventures in the wonderful world of nature Though inadequate to apprehend the synthetic reality (beauty) of art and the integral reality of spirit, intellect is not entirely unuseful for enlightening man on the path of spiritual aspiration. Though estranged from integral reality, and also alien in nature to it to a great extent, it is also considerably akin to it If it cannot lead one into the region of spiritual reality, it can at least guide one on the way to it Shankara also has conceded the utility of reason in connection with spiritual realization and has recommended that reason also should be given due regard.[27] A great use of intellect is in restraining a person from deviating into the enchanting alleys of sensual temptations which distract a man most from the spiritual goal of life Though the spirit is realized by an aspirant in immediate and integral intuition in which it reveals its grace, yet intellect can contribute much to the spiritual endeavour of man by way of regulating senses and enlightening moral conduct which chastens one's being and makes him more deserving for divine grace of the supreme spirit

The Katha Upanishad assigns the rightful place to intellect in the significant figure of chariot which it uses to indicate the

26 अविज्ञातं विजानताम् ।   केन० उप० २-३

27 तर्कमप्यादर्तव्यम् ।   शाकर भाष्य

character and role of various faculties of man in relation to the supreme spirit.[28] In this figure the Supreme Spirit is deemed as the Hero and the body is compared to a chariot. As the hero sits inside the chariot so the spirit resides in the human body. The hero is the master of the chariot so the spirit is the master of the body. Hence it is called Dehin, one to whom the body belongs. The chariot is to be driven according to the intentions of the Hero. The driver should implicitly understand the intentions of the hero. Intellect is akin to the driver of the Chariot of the body. It should direct the chariot of the body according to the intentions of the spirit The senses are like the horses and mind is like the reins through which the former can be controlled and driven by intellect according to the intentions of the spirit. The figure explains further that when the intellect acts in accordance with the spirit it can control the unruly horses of senses[29] and lead a person to the goal of spiritual realization [30]

The Katha Upanishad clearly accepts refined intellect as an instrument by which persons of refined vision can have a vision of the supreme spirit which is hidden in all beings and which rarely reveals itself to man.[31] The intellect which can be capable of having a vision of Spiritual reality must be mellowed by the faith of a purified heart. Such a mellowed intellect can apprehend the spiritual reality which is not accessible to physical eyes and the vision of which hardly stays before man [32] The Shweta-

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28 आत्मान रथिन विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव च वुद्धि तु सारथि मन्ये मन प्रग्रहमेव च। कठ० उप० १-३-३

29 कठ० उप० १-३-५, ६

30 कठ० उप० १-३-६

31 एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोत्मा न प्रकाशति। द्रश्यते त्वग्रया वुद्धया सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभि:। क० उप० १-३-१

32 न सदृशे तिष्ठति तस्य रूपम्। श्वे० उप० ४-२०

shwatara Upanishad also corroborates this rare possibility of spiritual vision by intellect mellowed by sincere faith of a purified heart[33] The Christian gospel that 'only the pure in heart will see God' accords with this Upanishadic conviction. Intellect can lead to a glimpse of spiritual reality but only when it surrenders its arrogance to the Supreme spirit and guides life according to the intentions of the spirit.[34] The Bhagwadgita also demands a surrender of intellect to supreme spirit for attaining spiritual realization[35]

The intellect is a unique faculty of man. It is the light of man's life. All civilization and culture including spiritual philosophy of the Upanishads, is mainly a gift of intellect. All that is expressed in speech and language and is communicatad to fellow beings is essentially intellectual. Intellect has its limitations in regard to art, religion, mysticism, spirituality etc. due to its analytical objective and dualistic character, yet it has remarkable capacity to explore these also to a considerable extent Intellect occupies a uniquely privileged place in human existence According to the Samkhya cosmology, which is largely accepted by other systems of Indian thought also, intellect stands between Supreme Spirit and Ego in the order of existence Though it lacks the integrity, immediately and blissfulness of spirit, it is close to it & it has a unique privilege to judge everything below it including the ego Being above ego it possesses a kinship with Supreme Spirit, which is not allowed to any other mode of man's being All other modes of man's being are below ego and are fraught with duality (diversity) which is antagonistic to Spiritual being. Intellect being above ego has an intrinsic disposition towards spirit, though its objective disposition limits its power in regard to it If by moral discipline

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33 हृदा मनीया मनसाभिक्लृप्त. । श्वे० उप० ३-११

34 कठ उप० १-१-१३

35 मयि वुद्धि निवेशय । गीता

it is tinged with humility (of which it is naturally capable because it is above ego) it becomes akin to intuition and can visualize the supreme spirit though it cannot still realize it It is neutral by nature as it is impersonal because it is above ego. It is only by its inclination towards ego and its illusory identification with ego that intellect assumes arrogance, which is detrimental not only to spiritual enlightenment but also to intellectual advancement Great thinkers have been and should be humble

In terms of Indian principle of trinity of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, intellect can be deemed to be of three kinds. All the three elements compose human nature in their different proportions Moral and spiritual discipline consists in reducing the dominance of tamas and rajas and in increasing the effect of Sattva in life, Tamas can be reduced by moral and altruistic conduct and by acquiring more and spiritual knowledge and understanding, as tamas is the cause of lethargy and ignorance Rajas also is reduced by these two methods as they diminish the attachment and selfishness which is due to the dominance of rajas Sattva is amenable to spiritual enlightment It is the finest form of physical being which is most conducive to spiritual enlightenment. Sattva dominates in intellect naturally When intellect is dominated by rajas or tamas it is due to its decline from its original nature. If intellect is saved from this decline and is prompted by moral discipline and spiritual knowledge to rise towards spirit, it can certainly enlighten our way to spirit and lead us the door of the land of spirit. Led by it we can hope to enter it and enjoy divine bliss and spiritual beatitude.

The utility and status of intellect to this extent has been recognised in Vedic course of discipline sponsored by Yajnavalkya in the Upanishad and adopted by all later followers of the Vedanta This course of discipline consists of three steps. The first is listening faithfully to the spiritual instructions of the realized teacher It is called Shravan The second step is called manana or contemplation over what has been listened and

learnt. The third is meditation or nididhyasana through which understanding of spiritual truth from the teacher and contemplation over it is converted into actual realization of spiritual reality Of these three methods the first two are obviously intellectual in character Listening to teacher's instructions is an intellectual process All communication through language is intellectual, as language is largely conceptual. Though the teachings of Spiritual sages were more suggestive than informative and often the teachers advised their disciples to adopt practical courses of penance for spiritual realization as is elucidated by the example of Bhrigu in the Taittiriya Upanishad, yet the intellectual element in oral instruction and in teaching of scripture is undeniable The second step of contemplation is also intellectual though not entirely so The aspirant was required to think and contemplate over what he had learnt from the teacher. Contemplation involves some cognition and is in so far intellectual Nididhyasana or meditation was the least intellectual and most mystical method of spiritual realization But that this third step was preceded by two dominantly intellectual stages of discipline shows the place which intellect occupies in the Upanishads and Vedantic disciplines

In fact intellect is the best instrument that is given to man for any kind of cultural attainment It becomes detrimental to cultural and spiritual advancement only when it declines towards ego under the influence of rajas and tamas and identifies itself with ego Ego and individuality are the mode of duality Intellect in itself, if not integral, is not individualistic, it is rather neutral and impersonal It is not personal or partial even to the person to whom it belongs Hence it acts as a judge and critic of his one's own wrongs When intellect is chastened by moral and altruistic conduct and is enlightened by spiritual knowledge it rises towards visualizing the spiritual reality The duality and discord implied in its nature is minimized by its surrender to spirit and the heat of its dialectic is transformed into the mellow light of spritual enlightenment It is in this

stage that intellect is spiritualized as is required by the Isha Upanishad for all modes of life; and a spiritualized intellect becomes the instrument of realization of spirit of which it is the closest kin and of which now it becomes the humble servant guiding man in the service of the supreme Spiritual Being.



## CHAPTER—XII

# SIGNIFICANCE OF SLEEP IN UPANISHADS

Sleep is a most mysterious phenomenon of human and animal life It is peculiar to biological beings Inanimate objects like stones do not sleep or they may be taken to be eternally sleeping without ever waking up. Sleep is an interlude in active life of living beings It is the suspension of active life and is in so far opposite of it It can be understood only in relation of biological activity i e activities of living creatures The activity of living creatures is natural, but it is also voluntary to some *extent They can vary and adjust it according to their need of* time Activity of nature is constant and general It is always going on. There is no wilful suspension of it It varies and stops also according to general laws The earth rotates or revolves constantly according to a general law ingrained in its being. Things and creatures on the earth move along with it and according to its movements Rivers flow constantly according to their own laws The natural activity is in a way one-dimensional. River flowing on the earth and the wind blowing on over it can be treated as another dimension of activity The fish swimming up the stream and birds flying in wind represent a third dimension of activity It is an activity which is different from the flowing of the river or the blowing of the wind These activities are natural and general. But the activity of living creatures is partly voluntary They *initiate it* They can vary *it and also* stop it when they need or like They can put themselves to rest Men and animals both can do it

Such biological activity which is partly controllable by a creature is a third dimension of activity. It is variable and capable of being suspended by the creature concerned. This suspension of biological activity by a creature can be possible even

during waking It can put itself to rest when it needs or likes. But suspension of activity during waking is only partial Manual activity may be suspended but sensory activity continues even in the state of wakeful rest A man or animal does not move his or its hands and legs, but his or its senses are as active as before He or it may close his or its eyes, but its ears are alert and the tactual sensation is active His or its mind also is alert and active Hence rest is to be regarded as only a partial suspension of activity. It is particulary suspension of manual or motor activity. But even this partial suspension of activity as waking rest indicates the voluntariness and variability of biological activity.

Sleep is greater suspension of activity. Even sensory and mental activity is greatly, if not wholly, suspended in sleep. A sleeping person is not so sensitive to sound and touch as a waking man is People generally sleep with eyes closed and like to sleep in dark so that light may not penetrate their eyes The mental activity of a sleeping person is also suspended in the sense that avenues of objective perception are closed A sleeping man does not indulge in objective thinking as a waking man does, though he is disturbed in sleep by the subjective thinking which is described as dream and which continues at least for a part of the duration of sleep A sleep without dreams is the deepest sleep and is described by a distinct designation of Sushupti in Sanskrit an exact equivalent of which perhaps does not exist in any other language

This sleep or dreamless sleep is a highly mysterious phenomenon of biological existence. It can be said to be natural in so far as it seems to come naturally to man and animals In a way it is forced by nature on them, perhaps as a necessity of life Man has to sleep sometime even when he does not want to sleep He cannot afford not to sleep When a person keeps late due to some work, he feels dozing Students who want to study till late hours begin to doze on their tables Passengers

sleep in omnibuses without intention to sleep. A child goes to sleep in the lap of mother without giving any notice of it Students also sleep in classes which are uninteresting and audience sleeps in lectures which are boring and long As natural sleep seems to be involuntary You cannot sleep by will It comes to you automatically and often unnoticed But man realizes the need of sleep So he intends to get it normally He prepares for it He suspends at least his physical activity He also tries to suspend his mental activity for this purpose He makes a mental disposition for sleep. Thus sleep can be said to be partly voluntary at least in its introductory disposition.

But the actual phenomenon of sleep is highly mysterious. It is evident that it is a counter-part of bodily, sensory and mental exertion during the waking and is designed by nature to afford rest and recoupment of energy to the body, senses and mind What is mysterious about sleep is the directing principle of it and the inner implications of the state of sleep That the body, senses and mind cannot work constantly and require rest after some work is simple to understand Such rest is availed of by man and animals in short and long intervals even within the course of activity But the rest enjoyed in sleep both by men and animals mainly during night is a highly mysterious and miraculous phenomenon particularly in regard to its motivation and internal implication and deeper significances Indian thought has tried to explore these deeply Even such ancient and spiritual works as Upanishads contain serious endeavours at exploration of the phenomenon of sleep in regard to its deeper implications

The Upanishads do regard activity as an essential and integral dimension of supreme spiritual reality, but the transcendent dimension of reality which, though immanent in all activity as its controlling and regulating principle or force but which implies by virtue of its very transcendence peace and non-activity (which does not mean staticness but unaffectabi-

lity by activity and duration), is the deeper and truer dimension of spiritual reality. Therefore it is said to be moving yet not moving[1] and to be running faster than the mind while remaining stand-still[2] Peace is understood as the deeper and truer nature of spirit[3] The state of spiritual realization is described as one in which senses are composed along with the mind and even the intellect ceases its activity[4] Sleep is natural and normal state in which man attains every day (every night) a semblance of this transcendental state of external composure of senses and inner peace of mind Hence Upanishadic thought regards it akin to the realization of spiritual reality which is the deepest and truest being of man

The Upanishads understand that man attains naturally and normally (though temporarily) his true being in sleep The Chhandogya Upanishad deals elaborately with phenomenon of sleep and its deeper significance in two chapters It initiates the exploration of sleep with the statement of the fundamental principle of sleep according to it and which is also in accordance with the view of other Upanishads That principle is that when a person sleeps he attains (though temporarily) his true being and is endowed with the (peaceful) glory of spiritual reality[5] The very etymology of the word for sleeping (Swapiti) is understood to imply and embody this metaphysical principle of sleep 'Swa' in 'Swapiti' is taken to signify 'self' or 'own' self or 'own being' and 'piti' denotes 'attainment' of it This etymological analysis of 'Swapiti' (meaning 'sleeps') is not at all

1 तदेजते तन्नैजते । ईश० उप० ४

2 अनेजदेक मनसो जवीयो । ईश० उप० ५

3 शान्तम् । मा० उप०

4 यदा पंचावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टते तामाहु परमा गतिम् । कठ० उप० २-३-१०

5 छा० उप० ६-८-१

strained but is according to the common meaning of these words which is ascribed to them in general usage of Sanskrit language. It signifies that the idea of man's true being as internally peaceful is ingrained in the very texture of Sanskrit language in regard to this word 'Swapiti' for sleeping, as it is in case of numerous other words, because Sanskrit is a highly cultural and deeply philosophical and metaphysical language

That this restoration of man to its true being in sleep implies rest and peace from the exertion of wakeful life of activity is implied in the phenomenon and idea of sleep. Shankara in his commentary on chapter of Chhandogya Upanishad dealing with sleep makes it explicit He explains that sleep is induced & caused by exertion due to activity of waking state [6] True being of man is understood to be restful and peaceful in Upanishads and also by Shankara Hence he understands that sleep is restoration of man to his true being He further explains that relief from exertion of activity cannot be obtained anywhere else except in restoration to one's own true being hence it is evident that a person resorts to his true divine (spiritual) being in order to obtain relief in sleep from the exertion of waking activity [7]

Thus sleep is evidently and primarily a state of rest in which the biological and psychological being of man seeks and secures relief from the exertion of waking state and recoups energy for further activity of life That the Upanishads understand this resful state of sleep as a restoration of man's being to its true state, is a reflection of the view of the Upanishad

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6 जाग्रच्छ्रमनिमित्तोद्भवत्वात् स्वापस्येत्याहु ।

शाकर भाप्य छा० उप० ६-८-१

7 नान्यत्रस्वरूपावस्थानाच्छ्रमापनोद स्यात् ।

शाकर भाप्य छां० उप० ६-८-१

about the deeper and truer dimension of reality which it regards as peaceful and blissful and transcendent of activity particularly of change, mutation, deterioration, exhaustion etc. implied in it. The metaphysics of the Upanishadic view of sleep may appear to be fantastic to those who are prejudiced in favour of empiricism and naturalism in regard to man's life, but there is considerable meaning and truth in it. It indicates the depth and extent to which sages of the Upanishads could explore the deeper significance of sleep in those ancient times. They could do it by virtue and in the background of their greater discovery of the spiritual being and destiny of man, which is the first and the last truth of life offered as the noblest gift of India to future mankind. The truth of the spiritual being and destiny of man can be understood and realized only in actual, immediate and integral experience which is characterised by enduring bliss and which can be secured only when one is able to suspend and transcend his physical and mental activities. Involvement in activity and obsession with intellect, reason and argument are an obstruction to such realization. The integral spiritual experience cannot be rendered into and understood in terms of empirical facts and dualistic reasoning. The transcendent, peaceful and blissful spiritual reality is not only the ultimate destiny of man, it is also the deepest source of sustenance of empirical life as well. As the Katha, Brihadaranyaka and other Upanishads maintain, man lives by it and by a fraction of bliss of supreme spiritual reality.[8] Withdrawal from involvement in activity and suspension of reasoning by faith of some kind can confirm the spiritual truth of life by affording greater energy for activity, greater efficiency in action and greater delight in work. This can be secured by some spiritual and moral discipline undertaken willingly in waking life.

Sleep is a natural gift and a divine grace of this discipline to man as an involuntary and usual phenomenon of life. It is

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8 बृह० उप० ४-३-३२

only by the spiritual dimension of sleep that restoration of energy, and refreshing cheerfulness obtained thereby, can be convincingly explained Suspension of activity in sleep is only a negative factor which can explain the minimization of consumption of energy in sleep Energy is spent in activity and activity is largely suspended in sleep, hence it is simple to understand that expenditure of energy also is minimized in sleep. It is a negative phenomenon which can explain conservation of energy but not increase in energy. Increase in energy can be partly explained by better digestion of food during sleep and production of new energy thereby But some energy is also consumed in the activity of digestion, though digestion normally creates a surplus of energy But even this does not explain the abundance or the excess of energy which is generally secured by sound and healthy sleep. The feeling of freshness and cheerfulness of mood is a finer form of this excess still less explicable in empirical and physical terms And above all, there is an excess of energy which is afforded by sleep and which cannot be explained adequately in physical terms Such an excess of energy and exuberance is in fact constantly being afforded to man even in his normal waking life particularly in childhood, adolscence and youth This excess is not commensurate with physical terms and is beyond and above the law of adequacy which rules in the empirical and physical world of science. This excessive principle is the mysterious truth of spiritual reality which underlies and upholds the entire existence. The creation of universe is an expression of this excessive principle of spiritual reality. The idea of this excessiveness of spiritual reality is contained in some cryptic utterances of Indian scriptures The Rigveda declares that the entire cosmic existence is only a foot (i e a quarter) of the supreme being and the other three feet or quarters of it are in the heaven i e in the transcendental world of its own being'[9] The Upanishad states that it (the supreme being) encircled the entire cosmic existence

9 पादोस्य सर्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृत दिवि । छा० उप० ३-१२-६

from all sides i e encompassed it and still exceeded it by ten fingers [10] The ten fingers are not a mathematical measure but only a mark of excess in terms of common parlance. The Bhagwadgita also confirms this excessive principle of spirituality at several places. It regards the universe as sustained by a fragment of spiritual reality.[11] The spiritual reality is not exhausted in immanence in cosmic modes of existence but it exceeds or transcends them [12]

So the spiritual reality is excessive in its nature and transcends all physical and mathematical laws of adequacy. It is only in terms of this excessive spiritual reality that the freshness of spirit and the excuberance of energy that one feels after a sound and healthy sleep can be satisfactorily explained. The Sanskrit terms 'Swapiti' for 'sleep' and its significance understood by Upanishads and as explained by Shankara as restoration of man (in sleep) to its own being, contains and clarifies the relation of sleep to the excessive spiritual reality. Sleep restores energies and refreshes spirits of man primarily by virtue of its relation with peaceful and abundant spiritual reality Every man has the divinely offered opportunity to restore every day (i e every night) his contact with the supreme source of energy which lies within his being and in which he is sustained It is from this supreme source of energy that he receives fresh charges of energy every day (i e. every night) through sleep and it is by this grace of energy that he acquires fresh zeal for living and working every next day. Every man obtains this privilege unknowingly in sleep. Sleep is not only a suspension of activity but also a suppression of cognitive consciousness This also is a sign of its kinship with spiritual being which is transcendent of cognitive consciousness. Cognitive conscious-

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10 स विश्व परितो वृत्वाऽत्यतिष्ठत्त दशाग्गुलम् ।

11 एकांशेन स्थित जगत् । गीता

12 न त्वह तेषु ते मयि । गीता

ness is objective in so far as it is related to objects External objects are cognised by senses which withdraw from active functioning and suspend their perception in sleep Objective cognition is therefore, suspended in sleep In a part of sleep mental ideation continues in the form of dreaming and discounts the depth of sleep. Real sleep according to Upanishads is a deep sleep without dreams The Upanishadic thought distinguishes between sleep and dream with a sharpness with which perhaps it is not done in Western thought So in deep sleep without dreams, which is real sleep and which every one gets for some time within normal sleep, cognitive consciousness also is suppressed alongwith suspension of activity Activity and consiousness are two main modes of extrovert life, which cloud man's deeper spiritual being during active and wakeful life. As they are largely transcended in deep sleep, the deeper spiritual being is spontaneously restored and revealed It is not cognitively conscious Hence one is not aware of his restoration to his deeper spiritual being during deep sleep as the Upanishads state The Chhandogya Upanishad says that 'restored to his blissful truer being the sleeping person does not cognise this fact The sleeping person not only does not cognise objects, but also the fact that he does not cognise them, nor is he aware of the fact that he is restored to his deeper and truer spiritual being[13] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that during sleep the self rests alongwith intellect and therefore does not know anything![14] Therefore it is said that 'men attain the realm of spiritual being every day in sleep and return from it and do not know about it[15]

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13 छा० उप० ८-११-१

14 वृह० उप० २-१-१६

15 सर्वा प्रजा अहरहर्गच्छन्त्य एत ब्रह्मलोक, न विन्दन्ति अनृतेन हि प्रत्यूढा ।

छा० उप० ८-३-२

That a person in deep sleep goes beyond activity and normal cognitive consciousness is established in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad by an empirical experiment in which a man who was sleeping did not wake up when he was called by someone to rise up. He did not evidently hear the call, as his sensory functions were suspended in sleep. But when some one caught hold of his hand and pulled him up, he woke up.[16] This experiment conducted in ancient Upanishadic times, confirms practically that a sleeping person suspends all cognitive sensibility during sleep and is not aware of anything. On one hand sleep implies a restoration of self to its truer being which is spiritual and transcendent of empirical cognitions, and on the other hand it expresses in transcendence not only of empirical cognitions but also of empirico-ethical modes of a man's being which are undeniable in waking state. It is said in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that in deep sleep a father is not father, a thief is not thief; man reaches in sleep in a transcendential realm of being unconnected with good and evil, and beyond sorrows of empirical life.[17] Experience in deep sleep is transcendent of cognitions of empirical objects of the world and also of empirico-ethical modes of man's being which he recognises during wakeful state. This transcendence takes him beyond good and evil and also beyond sorrows of empirical life Thus the experience of deep sleep comes about to be blissful also A popular statement in connection with treatment of sleep in Indian philosophy states the example of a person who awaking after deep sleep confirms the transcendent and blissful character of deep sleep in the words that 'I slept peacefully and happily and I was not aware of anything during deep sleep[18] This is a common judgement of every man after deep sleep.

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16 बृह० उप० २-१-१५

17 बृह० उप० ४-३-२२

18 सुखमहमस्वाप्स न किंचिदवेदिषम् ।

The Mandukya Upanishad which contains a profound metaphysical exposition of sleep along with other states of man's confirms this blissfulness of deep sleep, and also the transcendence of empirical cognitions in this state It regards sleep as the third dimension of man's being According to it deep sleep is a blissful state in which a person does not desire anything & does not see any dreams[19] This deep sleep state is a state in which all empirical experiences disappear or are drowned.[20] Such transcendent bliss is the character of supreme spiritual being which is the supreme reality according to Upanishadic Vedanta Dreamless deep sleep is characaterized by such blissful and transcendent being hence it is considered to be akin to transcendent spiritual being which is the true being of man and which a person spontaneously attains during deep sleep without being aware of this fact.

That in this deep sleep one does not have any awareness of his attaining (though temporarily) his deeper and truer blissful being, is also a deep mark of the immediacy and integrality of sleeping experiences like the blissful experience which is the ultimate destiny of man. Awareness is a character of cognitive consciousness which is objective in the sense that it refers to objects different from the cognising subject and is thus fraught with duality of subject and object As all external and even internal objects disappear in deep sleep, it transcends the level of cognitive consciousness characterized by awareness Hence in deep sleep one reaches a level of deeper or higher experience which is to be characterized by immediacy and integrality on account of being beyond duality of subject and object and consequent awareness Not only the awareness of objects and objective ideas is not present in deep sleep, but the awareness of self or ego also is not found in it That also involves a dischotomy within the subject itself The yoga philosophy assumes such a

19 यत्र सुप्तो न कञ्चन कामं कामयेत न कञ्चन स्वप्न पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम् ।
सुषुप्तस्थान. एकीभूत प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयः । मां० उप० ५

20 सुषुप्तस्थान प्राज्ञो मकारस्तृतीय मात्रा मितेरपीतेर्वा मिनोति ह वा इदं सर्वमपीतिश्च भवति । मा० उप० ११

dischotomy when it regards ego to be the subject of soporific experience. According to Yoga the judgment of a person after waking that he slept soundly and was not aware of anything is a recollection of experience which one has during sleep. Recollection is only a revival of an original experience If a man recollects after sleep that he slept soundly and was not aware of anything, it implies that he was experiencing during sleep what he recollects in the form of later judgment. 'I slept soundly' and 'I was not aware of anything' are experiences which imply ego as the subject. This can be conceded as an immediate and integral experience of ego, if such an experience is understandable and acceptable, but it cannot be conceded as an experience is understandable and acceptable, but it cannot be conject and an object Such a dichotomy is evident in all egoistic judgments of waking experience In so far egoistic experience is not immediate and integral. It implies a subtler dichotomy of subject and object than is reflected in objective judgements What seems to be truer is that there is no self-conscious experience in deep sleep and the judgement 'I slept soundly and was aware of nothing in deep sleep' seems to be more of an inference from the refreshened state enjoyed after waking up from deep sleep, rather than a recollection of actual sleeping experience

The Yoga also recognises sleep as a 'mode of mind' which is characterized by absence of cognitive modes of waking state[21] It considers it as mode which has as its object the ego, though other modes are absent in it Thus the Yoga sleep is less close to Samadhi than the Upanishadic sleep. The Yoga also classified sleep into three kinds according to the dominance of the three gunas Tamasic sleep is characterized by feeling of stupidity and darkness in which one is at a loss to recognise immediately where he is It is deep but not so refreshing. The Rajas sleep

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21 अभावप्रत्ययालम्बना वृत्तिर्निद्रा । योगसूत्र

is still less refreshing due to mental activity of dreaming and results in lethargy after waking. The sattvic sleep is refreshing and illuminating There is no dream activity in it. Sattvic sleep is closest to the Upanishadic conception of deep and dreamless sleep which is designated as sushupti It is closely akin to samadhi or the realization of spiritual being The Yoga conception of sleep is governed by the immanence of nature and its gunas and the persistence of their modifications even in sleep. They refute the absence of mental modes in sleep which is insisted upon by the Vedantins The Vedantic and the Upanishadic view of sleep in characterized by absence of mental modes and transcendence of them (however temporary) Thus the Vedantic sleep is very close to Samadhi The attainment of one's true being in sleep is the essence of sleep according to the Upanishads They define it etymologically and metaphysically as attainment of one's true being.

Both the Yoga and the Upanishads seems to be correct in their respective ways Both of them look at sleep from their different points of view The Yoga looks at the obvious mode of sleep which is characterized by the immanence of gunas and consequence mental modes The Upanishadic view penetrates to the deeper core of sleep which transcends this modality of mind and reaches close to the state fo samadhi or spiritual being. Every ordinary sleep involves both these aspects of sleep. But the sleep is real deep sleep worthy of the designation of Sushupti defined as blissful, desireless and dreamless in the Mandukya Upanishad The Upanishads explore the deeper secret of sleep which consists in man's reaching the door of the transcendental realm of spirit and his receiving fresh energy from the ultimate source of it, without which man's renewed enthusiasm for living and working cannot be explicable While the Yoga view exposes the limitations of sleep which constitute the defect of sleep, the Upanishadic view reveals the deeper secrets of the real and deeper core of sleep as it forms the natural bridge between life and spiritual reality The difficulty in Yoga view of sleep is caused by their initial estrangement of natural being of man

from spiritual being without a schema between the two. The Upanishadic or the Vedantic view and its deeper vision into sleep is facilitated by their understanding of the intrinsic spiritual being of man, of which he is not entirely devoid even in waking life. In fact man lives and enjoys by virtue of it common kinship with spiritual being which he more closely (though temporarily) realizes in deep dreamless sleep and which is finally and permanently realized in liberation. Thus the Vedantic sleep forms a schema between life and liberation. Practically it serves as a daily dole of energy from the supreme and the only source of it. Complete oblivation of cognitive consciousness and suspension of all activity in deep sleep confirms the fact of kinship with Samadhi or spiritual being.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad regards sleep as an intermediate stage between waking and spiritual being or as a meeting point of the two.[22] According to it the self in sleep shines in its own light. Even the dreams are understood by it as independent creations of self-luminous sleeping self.[23] One creates chariots etc. where there is nothing[24] He also wanders in the world after getting out of the body in dream and revels with women[25] He takes away with him the vital beings as the kings takes his attendants with him.[26] This, of course, is a fantastic view of dream, though it appears to be according to the popular impression and experience of dreaming. Dream is an intermediate state between waking and sleeping Objectivity of waking is suspended in it, but the inner ideation of mind persists in it perhaps due to the effect of Rajas in life Life is dynamic and temporal. As it is fraught with the mode of time,

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22 बृह० उप० ४-३-६

23 बृह० उप० ४-३-१०

24 न तत्र रथा बृह० उप०

25 बृह० उप० ४-३-१३

26 बृह० उप० २-१-१८

activity tends to continue in it. Even when physical activity tends to continue in it Even when physical activity is not possible, mental activity persists It happens so when a man is sitting or lying idle. So it happens in dream Dream activity is another great mystery of life Waking activity is governed by objective limitations and laws So there is nothing fantastic about it Dreaming activity is relieved of these limitations and laws of waking So it becomes fantastic Freud and his followers have revealed the wonders of this dreamland of man But with all its fantasy they believe it to be rooted in waking experience. Its fantasticness follows from the unconscious complexes of which man is not aware. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is so mystified by the fantasticness of dreams that it does not accept them to be reflections of waking life[27] They are in fact so wonderful and strange that they apparently seem to be unconnected with waking life. The genius of Freud has explored this deep connection of dreams with waking life The naive common sense of Brihadaranyaka in regard to the relation of dreams with waking life is permissible and pardonable for those ancient times It is according to the common experience of man

However the deep sleep as intended by the Upanishads is entirely devoid of dreams which constitute the second dimension of man's being. Sleep is the third dimension of being and is to be distinguished from them Real sleep is a state of being which is devoid of dreams It is in its freedom from mental modes both of waking and of dreams that deep sleep reaches a stage of being close and akin to transcendent spiritual being which constitutes the fourth and the transcendent dimension of ultimate spiritual reality Spiritual reality is not merely transcendent It is also immanent and it is the sustaining force of existence and life by virtue of immanence, though being transcendent and abundent it is not exhausted in this immanence

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27 बृह० उप० ४-३-१४

It is by virtue of this immanence of spiritual reality in the life and being of man that he enjoys in some measure his secular existence and reaches in deep dreamless sleep the door of ultimate spiritual being every day (i.e. every night).

It is remarkable that the Upanishads discovered the deep spiritual secret of sleep in life and emphasised its importance in such ancient times. The accusation that Indian thought discounted the value of waking life and activity and urged man to seek refuge from realities of life in the oblivion of spirituality and sleep (which they thought to be akin to the former) is based on a refusal to understand and appreciate the deeper significance of sleep in life.[28] It is wrong to take sleep as a negation of waking life. It is so only if one sleeps physically when it is necessary to keep awake. Mentally it is wrong if it leads to neglect of responsibilities of waking life. The intention of Upanishadic emphasis on sleep is not to encourage these wrongs in life. The intention of the Upanishads is to understand the significance of sleep deeply, with the purpose of improving waking and empirical life and also for discovering the clue to spiritual salvation through kinship of sleep with the former. The former motive is not clear in the Upanishads but it can be easily deduced from the freshness and buoyancy which is afforded to man by deep and dreamless sleep which is of a sattvic character. It can also be deduced from the blissful character of sleep and its kinship with spiritual being and consequent increase by sleep in the energetic spiritual invigoration of life Thus Upanishadic exploration of sleep is like the creation of space-sattelites for the purpose of both improving the earthly life and advancing in approach to high ethereal regions. A proper understanding of the mysterious phenomenon of sleep can lead both to betterment of waking life and to spiritual salvation of life, by virtue of its intermediation between the two. It is highly useful to understand the significance of sleep for both these

28 Introduction to Indian Philosopy by D.P. Chattopadhyaya.

purposes It is all the more important to understand the secrets of this wonderful phenomenon of life in the context of modern life in which due to may mental, social and environmental reasons both quality and quantity of sleep are deplorably decreasing and consequently not only the spiritual salvation of man but peaceful and healthy secular life is also being endangered

Modern life is dominantly scientific, industrial and urban Urbanization has led to crowding of population in cities Industries have increased activity, traffic, business and noise in cities The environment in cities has become highly detrimental to sleep due to noise and other kinds of disturbances The personal life of man has also become less amenable to sleep due to personal, social and mental reasons Personal reasons are business, sensationalism intellectualism, hyper-consciousness, loneliness and lack of love Man is too much occupied in work He is in hurry and has no peace Work wearies a man and makes more sleep necessary for restoration of energy. But other factors obstruct sleep Sensationalism binds man more to objectivity which, by its relation to cognitive consciousness, is opposed to sleep Intellectualism increased by education and science fosters consciousness which is unfavourable to sleep Loneliness and lack of domestic loves makes man hyperconscious His subjective occupation with his own life and its problems intensifies consciousness Consciousness is a necessary factor of common, normal and waking life But intensification of it makes life miserable and unpeaceful Transcendence of it is necessary even in waking life and suspension of it in sleep is necessary for refreshing man for daily activity It is only one dimension of life Transcendence is higher dimension of reality and life Consciousness is an activity. It is a mental activity and involves a cognitive process in time Cognitive consciousness is objective The object can be external or internal, a physical thing or a mental idea Ideational consciousness is more intense It is a faster course It consumes more energy also due to intense activity It is more exhausting, and makes sleep more

necessary But it is more obstructive to sleep. It is also more obsessive. Physical activity can be and tends to be suspended due to limits of human capability for exertion. Objective cognition also can be suspended at will as it is sensory Vision depends much on our will though audition is forced by external noise which is not always in our control. Uncontrollable noise has widened and magnified in modern civilization. However mental activity or ideation is opposed to objective cognition in so far that the former tends to prolong itself rather than to suspend itself like physical activity, or even like sensory cognition

Loneliness and lack of domestic love further accelerate and intensify ideation of modern man. As all cognition is objective it has an external content and suffers from inner emptiness. This inner emptiness is filled only by spiritual content of bliss which supports all life implicitly and increase of which is the intention of all spiritualism Bliss is the only genuine content of man's inner being Objective content is illusory and incidental It is not intrinsic Now spirit is non-dualistic. The more we transcend duality the more spirituality and consequent content of bliss do we ensure in life. Love is a common form of non-duality This non-dualistic bliss of love counteracts and overcomes dualistic consciousness, particularly undesirable consciousness of futile and lonely ideation It is lacking in modern life due to isolation and individuation of man through many ways

Hence modern man is becoming more restless and sleepless Sleeping pills are becoming a daily doze for millions Popularity of Yoga and spiritualism is also explained by its promise of mental peace to modern man tormented by the tyranny of isolation and accelerated ideation. But Yoga and spiritualism alone cannot be helpful in this predicament of modern life They are to be supported by a suitable environmental adjustment Man can neither get peace nor sleep unless his secular and social life, is improved with regard to his social

and emotional relations and also in regard to the character of work and business Man is not born for work, but work is meant to provide happiness and peace to him. Nor God has given consciousness to man for suffering with lonely ideation or contemplation Consciousness is the light of God given to man for enlightening his way to the heaven of peace, and happiness It is not given to be intensified into a dazzling brilliance by subjective intensification and to blind him with excess of light Consciousness can be regulated, restrained and moderated by non-dualistic spirituality exemplified in love It can also be transcended in it Sleep is akin to non-dualistic and blissful spirituality. Hence cultivation of non-dualistic love and spirituality will also promote sleep Sleep is the schema of life which connects it with transcendental spiritual being which is destiny of man Love is the lever of social and domestic life which connects it with both sleep and spirituality Deep sleep of a child on the breast of mother elucidates the truth of this view The Upanishadic discovery of the spiritual secret of sleep along with that of life and reality revealed at the dawn of civilization the significance of sleep and also the true meaning of life both of which can lead to the betterment of life and also to the ultimate spiritual salvation of mankind



CHAPTER—XIII

# BIO-AESTHETIC VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

## 1. Introductory

It is now sufficiently evident that secular values are duly recognised in the Upanishads and that the Upanishads are not so ascetic and world-denying as they are represented to be by Western critics and Indian Advaitins. Ascetic and world-denying statements are rare and exceptional in the Upanishads and they cannot be treated as representing the general view of the Upanishads The Upanishads largely recognise secular values of food, sex, wealth etc. and have devoted whole sections for the treatment of these This treatment of secular values is done quite in earnest There is no reflection in it of the illusoriness or unreality of worldly values. It is true that in some statements like those of Katha Upanishad transitoriness of worldly values is asserted. That is a simple fact of life. But worldly values are not to be negated for their ephemerality. Negation of them will not improve human existence. It will make it worse and more miserable But most realistic recognition of worldly values cannot make them enduring. Life itself is transitory

All that can be possible in human life is a recognition of these values and such a transformation of them as may make their axiological content most satisfying This can be done by spiritual trans-valuation of secular values The Upanishads duly recognise the secular values and propose a trans-valuation of them according to the spiritual value which is the supreme value for the Upanishads.

A most remarkable feature of these ancient and allegedly ascetic scriptures of India is the recognition of some bio-aesthetic values which are highly appreciated in human culture and

and which are rarely recognised with such distinction in any axiological treatises Bio-aesthetic values are biological values embellished with aesthetic excellence i e endowed with beauty and grace of life Besides health, strength and physical fortitute, strong and aesthetically excellent built of parts of body deemed to be desirable and is prayed for by sages Beautiful built of the body is a natural ornament for man The beauty of body is a glory of man and distinguishes man from animals whose bodies are not so beautifully built Animals do not possess that aesthetic muscular modulation, particularly of face (and also of arms, thighs, chest etc.) which is given to man.

Besides the structural beauty of human body the lustre of the body and particularly of face is also appreciated in the Upanishads This lustre is a peculiarly human privilege It is not given to animals whose skin and face are not so aesthetic as those of man Animal skin is hairy and is aesthetic only in regard to the colour of hair Human skin is hairless particularly on face The beauty of human skin and face is not chromatic, but achromatic in the sense that it is considered to be beautiful for its fairness which is a negation of all colours and is closer to whiteness Statements in a Upanishad appreciate the lustre of body and face The cheerfulness of face with a smile is considered to be the sign of spiritual realization

Efficiency of senses is also desired in the Upanishads It is primarily a biological value, which is useful for men as well as animals; but it is also a cultural value for man as many cultural modes of life are based on it Sweet voice is particularly appreciated in Upanishads Speech is a special privilege of man It is regarded to be spiritual for its semantic significance But the sweetness of voice also is spiritual in so far as it is created by a non-dualistic i e an affectionate attitude towards others It is created by affection and it elicits affection from others Sweet voice attracts and makes people friendly to one who possesses it

The beauty of life is not merely bodily and physical It is social also Human life is primarily social The beauty and grace of it lies in social harmony The social aspect of the glory and grace of human life is duly appreciated in the Upanishads The teacher and the disciple cooperate amicably for spiritual learning They pray for intellectual amity between them They pray for common glory in life The highest proof of social harmony in the Upanishads is that they pray to acquire commonly even for spiritual glory and grace.

The highest form of beauty and grace in life as understood in the Upanishads consists in peace and blissfulness of spiritual experience The secular values are not confined in the Upanishads to the material or physical limits. They are extended in their significance to embrace beauty and grace of body and behaviour The mental peace and spiritual bliss is the divine consummation of these human and secular values. It is in this consummation that they find final fulfilment and highest exaltation in which they become instruments of divine life in human existence

These bio-aesthetic values have been briefly pointed out in a previous chapter dealing with bodily values But they are of such an unique importance in Upanishadic axiology that they can bear repetition here in some greater details

**2. Health, strength and aesthetic modulation of body and its parts**

Bio-aesthetic view of secular values in the Upanishads applies to the whole body and also to the parts which compose it Some modes of bodily being which are of special significance in human existence are emphasised Hearing, speech vision, voice, lustre of face etc are notable among them. The aesthetic excellence of parts of the body largely depends on health. It is only by the health and vigour of the body that these parts can be aesthetic in form and efficient in function. The aesthetic modulation of muscles and limbs of the body also depends on general

health of the body Body and its limbs are organically related to each other The inner secret of health is the efficient functioning of the inner organs of the body like the heart, liver, stomach etc Liver and stomach produce the vital substances from food and the heart distributes them with blood to every part of the body. Supply of food is necessary for it The Upanishadic emphasis on food reflects on its importance not only for living but for health also Health is a form of the body which is maintained by constant supply of food and proper functioning of the inner organs of the body.

This proper functioning of the organs of the body depends externally on physical work and exercise But internally it de-
the Isha Upanishad not only for long living but also for health.
pends on the spiritual harmony of life. Work is emphasised in
Living and working for a hundred years cannot be possible without good health. Work also is inspired by non-dualistic spirituality in life. A completely dualistic stone does not work It only moves with the rotation of the earth But proper functioning of inner organs of the body depends more deeply on non-dualistic spirituality the appreciation of which in this context can improve much the health of people Body-building substances are produced in greater quantity and are distributed to parts of the body with better efficiency and justice under inspiration from the spirit which is more effectively operative in non-dualistic conditions of human relations

Health creates strength. Both health and strength of the body are duly recognised in the Upanishads The importance of strength is so great according to the Upanishads that a person lacking in strength is not deemed fit to attain spiritual realization which is the highest goal of life So much is the importance of this relation of physical strength with spiritual realization that the fact has been mentioned twice in two important Upanishads—Katha and Mundaka—in almost identical words It is physical strength that is intended here and not the merit of ritual and worship as Shankara has tried to construe

Strong body is considered as an ideal for young men in the Upanishads.[1] The Upanishad pray for strength of the body in their shantipathas.

Physical strength is the fruit of health. Health is marked by a firm composition of limbs which also makes for beauty of the body. Slack limbs are not only a sign of ill-health, but also of ugliness of the body. The health of the body and its limbs has been prayed for in Shantipathas of the Upanishads which are repeated in several Upanishads. One of them prays for strength and fortitude of senses and of limbs of the body.[2] It is desired that the limbs may be full of strength and vigour. In another Shantipath it is prayed that we may devote our life to worship by firm limbs and strong body.[3] In the Taittiriya Upanishad a sage prays that his body may be smart and active.[4] Only a healthy and vigorous body can be smart.

Thus the Upanishad give due importance to health and physical strength and with it to beauty of the well-built body and well-formed limbs. It is true that the Shantipathas of the Upanishads are in tune with the ritualistic Vedic tradition, but so are some parts of Upanishads also, specially of Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka. The Upanishads oppose the ritual of the Vedas. But they have adopted these Shantipathas and chosen them for their content of meaning. Therefore as contained in them they cannot be treated to be outside the real scope of the Upanishads.

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1 युवास्यात · · · · द्रढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः । तै० उप० २-८-

2 आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि · · · · बलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि ।
शान्तिपाठ केन० उप०

3 स्थिरैरङ्गैः । शान्तिपाठ के० प्रश्न उप०

4 शरीरं मे विचर्षणम् । तै० उप० १-४

Not only the functional efficiency of body but also the formal beauty of it is basically spiritual. Spirit is a principle of harmony. The proportionate body has evolved as an expression of the spirit which lies behind the universe as its fundamental force. So are trees and flowers The expressive force of spirit is named beauty (sundari) in the Tantras and is the organizing force of a proportionate and beautiful body also

### 3. Lustre of the body and the face

Health and strength of the body reflect in the lustre of the body and more particularly of the face Brilliance of the skin is a sign both of health and beauty A dull skin is the sign of ill-health and reflects ugliness Brilliance and lustre are the distinctive qualities of human skin Animal akin is hairy and has some chromatic beauty But the beauty of human skin is not chromatic. Its complexion is not contained in the colours of spectrum like the feathers of birds. It is more a negation of colours in the white skin which as fair is deemed to be particularly beautiful The black and the yellow races have some chromatic tinge in their complexion But their skin also reflects beauty in brilliance and lustre which is reflection of light from the surface of the skin It is to be noted that light is assigned white colour in popular understanding Spirit also is conceived as akin to light Like light it reveals things to us The light of spirit is a frequent figure used in the Upanishads and in other spirituo-religious works So the lustre of the body and face may have some secret source in the spirit underlying the bodily existence of man.

The lustre of the body and the face is a reflection of light from the surface of the skin But it also depends on the smoothness, tightness and consequent reflectivity of the skin. This smoothness and tightness of the skin comes from health of the body It also depends on age. Children and youthful people generally have a smooth and reflective skin But even in young people it depends more on health than on age. A sickly child and a weakly young man do not have a smooth, tight and re-

splendent skin Many elderly healthy persons also maintain a smooth, tight and reflective skin for a longer age. So bodily and facial lustre depends more on health, though health depends on non-dualistic spirituality of life as indicated in the previous section of this chapter. The mental and through it, the spiritual basis of facial lustre can be ascertained by observation of some persons who possess a physically healthy body but do not possess a shining face. The dullness of their face is due to their lack of spirituality in domestic and social relations The spiritual truth of lustre of the face can further be ascertained by observing Muslim old men many of whom have a shining face even when they are not very healthy in view of the bulk of the body. Lean and thin Muslims also have a shining face It is not due to meat-eating merely. Lean and thin meat-eaters of other communities do not have it In fact it is due to the greater non-dualistic spirituality in the Muslim community, which is reflected in their greater communal unity and greater surrender of ego to a higher communal cause and to a supreme religious reality

The appreciation of the aesthetic value of the lustre of the face and of the body is found in some rare statements of the Upanishads One such statement is found in the Shwetarshwatara Upanishad where a brilliant complexion is counted among the fruit of yoga i e spiritual discipline[5] This statement also includes health or freedom from disease among the fruit of yoga and confirms the spiritual basis of both health and facial brilliance. The spirituality of facial brilliance is also implied in the idea of Brahma-varchasa or spiritual energy. Spirit is transcendent and immanent power It pervades in the processes of universe and life and also transcends them It energises the body also. Excellence of spirit in life creates greater glory and brilliance in life, which also reflects in the body and on

5 वर्ण प्रसाद । श्वे० उप० २-१३

the face As it is spiritual, it is called Brahma-varchasa It is both mental and physical In fact the lustre of the face is more deeply connected with mental spirituality, i e spirituality reflecting in the peace, serenity and cheerfulness of mind The Upanishadic sages pray to acquire this spiritual glory by a co-operative endeavour, which signifies the non-duality of spirit The child and youngman suffer less from effects of duality in life, which comes with age Hence they have a more natural brilliance on their face and body.

This brilliance of face can be acquired by spiritual discipline as is suggested by the story of Satyakama contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad[6] Satyakama was asked by his teacher to practice penance for spiritual realization When in the end of penance he came to his father the latter noticed the brilliance of his face and remarked that he seemed to have realized the spirit

The fragrance of body so much esteemed in modern bodily culture is also appreciated in the Upanishads and is counted among the fruit of Yoga

**4. Cheerfulness and smile**

Cheerfulness is the psycho-aesthetic reflection of health of body and brilliance of face It is rooted in brilliance of body and lustre of face, but it is more than both. The two are usually related and found together, but they are not identical Brilliance of body and lustre of face are spiritual in their source but they are physical in expression Cheerfulness and smile are psychological in their expression, though the latter reflects in some pecular modulations particularly of lips They also reflect in the eyes which are a most luminous and most expressive part of the body

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6 ब्रह्मविदेव सोम्य ते मुख भाति । छा० उप० ४-१४-२

Cheerfulness and smile is the most remarkable aesthetic excellence of human personality. We admire it most in the personality of others and esteem it as most covetable for ourselves Children are naturally and innocently cheerful and smiling Young girls laugh more than boys. Smile of young women is mysteriously bewitching. Cheerfulness and smile bestow a cool illumination on life much like the moonlight. It has a healing, healthy and wholesome effect on life of others also, besides marking the aesthetic excellence of the personality of the person who is endowed with and emits them

The discovery of the spiritual secret of sleep is a highly remarkable insight of the Upanishads. The recognition of cheerfulness and smile as the mark of spirituality is no less remarkable than discovery of spirituality of sleep. The Upanishads are often alleged to be ascetic, world-denying and pessimistic Reference to ephemeral and mortal character of pleasures of life are understood to reflect this pessimism Pessimism leads to melancholy in life, which is the opposite of cheerfulness and smile Cheerfulness and smile are signs of optimism. Optimism is a hopeful view of life. Epicurean optimism is an illusion which disappears before the hard realities of life Innocent optimism can be possible for children and young people. But people who have come of age generally become sober due to responsibilities and worries of life Many of them become even cynical and pessimistic by the greater pressure of despondency on life Cheerfulness and smile disappear when one is overwhelmed by sufferings, worries and anxieties of life

People who have less suffering and worry in life, are generally found to be cheerful and smiling. Prosperity is believed to be the source of cheerfulness It is true to some extent It relieves one of the worry of want and negatively contributes to cheerfulness But many rich and prosperous persons will be found to be melancholy and morose. The cause of their melancholy is mental and prosperity can not help them in this res-

pect It proves that cheerfulness is mental, and prospe
physical well-being is only an external cause of it

The internal source of cheerfulness and smile is s
Smile is released from a region which is above ego and
Cheerfulness and smile are naturally altruistic They
cheer around them. They spread like light and shed i
tion around This altruistic character of cheerfulness ar
indicates their spirituality which reflects in transcend
ego Ego is opposed to spirituality as it is individuali
dualistic If ego dominates in the nature of a person
be dry and unlovable Ego is the contraction of man'
Cheerfulness and smile is expansion of it beyond eg
promotes its merging gladly with the beings of other
pand and enrich it Cheerfulness is expressive of the inn
teousness of a man's nature. The effulgence of spirit,
above ego over-flows and innundates with its glory th
environment around a cheerful person

As spiritual, cheerfulness and smile are above intell
Intellect is sober, adequate, critical and dualistic, chee
and smile is expression of excessiveness of spir
as spiritual is affiliating It emanates from inner and
love and also generates love in others Cheerful pers
naturally loveable for we dislike melancholy wailers
alienation begets alienation from us An alienated and l
son does not smile

The axiological importance and spirituality of chee
and smile is confirmed in a rare statement of Chhandog
nishad in which the fact of spiritual realization of a
is judged by the preceptor by the smiling cheerfulnes
former after completion of a course of discipline.[7] T
nishadic spiritualism is not a melancholy pessimism N

an epicurean optimism the illusion of which cannot endure in life. It is a sound and profound optimism according to which cheerfulness and smile generate from spiritual source of man's being which lightens the burden of worries and transcends sufferings and releases the moonlight of delight from above the clouds of melancholy. It is both a result and sign of spirituality by which spiritualism should be tested.

**5. Efficiency of senses**

Secular life is largely sensory life. It expresses through sensory functions Ten senses of man are identified in Indian thought Of these five are cognitive senses and the other five are motor senses Manual efficiency is also important in life Its importance in Indian tradition is recognised in the very etymology of the word 'Kushala' used for efficiency in Sanskrit language. Importance of walking is emphasised in the Vedic dictum 'move on'.[8] Speech is outstanding among motor senses of man. Among the cognitive senses hearing and vision are more important. They are highly developed in man. Ears and eyes of animals also are very keen, quick and sharp. The dog, cat horse etc are very alert for the slightest sound. The vulture can see its pray from long distances Though mostly animals are guided by odour. for which they have a very keen sense, their ears and eyes also are very quick and keen.

In human organism, hearing and vision are more developed than in animals, specially in regard to quality and complexity. Human organs of hearing and vision are much more complex in formation than those of animals. Man can hear and distinguish between musical notes and also between spectral colours Animals do not see colours so finely as a men do Animal music also is a monotone and not a complex harmony of many tones like human melodies. Distinction between linguistic and

8 चरैवेति चरैवेति ।

also between the musical sounds is a unique achievement of human hearing, and distinction between numerous shades of chromatic colours also is remarkable in its range The infinite variety of flowers has a greater significance for the human eye than for animal vision The numerous varieties of butterflies are a feast for man's eyes and perhaps not so remarkable for their own mates The human retina is more complex and more endowed with cones which catch colour than the retina of animal eyes So human cochlea is a more complex organism than the animal ear The vestibular canals and the cilia in it are finer than in animal cochlea

The greater organic complexity and functional fineness of human eye and ear have led to the development of colourful arts and richly music and language. The importance of these two sense organs is amply recognised in common life Their importance is emphasised in the cultural tradition also 'Aksha' and 'Shravan' are used as suffixes and part of names of persons 'Sahashraksha' (thousand eyed) is the name of Indra the king of Heaven (paradise). Kamalaksha, Padmasksha (meaning lotus eyes) are names of persons in mythology Indra is a called Vriddhashrava Bhurishrava was a hero in the Mahatharata Shruti (hearing) is the original name for scripture Darshan (vision) is the name for philosophy So much is the importance of sight and hearing in cultural tradition of India Pratyaksha used for perception in philosophy confirms the primacy of sight in all cognition

The Upanishads also recognise the importance of sight and hearing and of other senses also They emphasise the efficiency of these senses and also the spiritual basis of this sensory efficiency One Shantipatha of an Upanishad repeated in others contains a prayer for vision of good happenings and deeds,[9] the echo of which is heard in the famous utterance

9 भद्र कर्णेभि शृणुयाम देवा भद्र पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्रा ।
शान्ति पाठ प्रश्न उप०

meaning 'May all people be happy, May all persons be healthy and May all people see good happenings and deeds.'[10] The Taittiriya Upanishad contains a prayer in which a sage prays for strong sense of hearing[11] The Upanishads deal at many places with the theme of senses. On these occasions the senses of sight and hearing are primarily mentioned. The beginning of the Kena Upanishad is a salient example of it.

But the source of the power and efficiency of these senses is understood to be spiritual in the Upanishads The Kena Upanishad regards the spirit as the ear of the ear and the eye of the eye, that is spirit is the ultimate and original source of power and efficiency of the senses, among them of the ear and the eye. Spirit is non-dualistic. The spirituality of these senses can be empirically tested by observing the effect of the concrete non-duality of human relations i.e of spiritual love and faith on the qualitative and functional efficiency of senses particularly of hearing and sight. This spiritual view of sensory effciency is of great educational value in life. The sensory efficiency of children can be properly developed from early age by co-operating with them affectionately in enhancing the non-dualistic spirituality of their inner being.

**6. Beautiful voice**

Beautiful voice is such an unique sensory efficiency that it deserves a separate treatment. Speech is a sensory function which is highly develped in man It has led to the growth of language, literature, science and culture. It has developed in collaboration with corresponding development of hearing and sight. Sight has supported the evolution of script. Yet language has remained fundamentally a function of speech Language is

10 सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिन· सर्वे सन्तु निरामया ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चित् दु खमाप्नुयात् ॥

11 कर्णाभ्या भूरि विश्रुवम् । तै० उप० १-४

a system of sounds which are distinguisesd in their identities by a fine ear. Musical notes also need a fine discrimination The cultural development of speech has taken two forms i e of language and music Language is a meaningful system of sounds. Music is not necessarily meaningful The meaning of music is not intellectual but essentially emotional Both language and music are communicable Communication is the very character of sound or speech. Communicability is mutual and implies a basic spirituality. Speech has an altruistic aspect, more definitely in hearing and is thus amenable to spirituality by transcending individualism Music when it is common singing as it is in a chorus becomes more concretely spiritual

The spirituality of speech has many dimensions Indian thought has traced these dimensions to the metaphysical depths. Meaning and music are spiritual in their commonness and communicability The sweetness of voice is the most mystical dimension of the spirituality of speech It has a subtle and inscrutable affiliating effect Sweet voice is admired and loved by every one The essence of music lies in sweetness of voice even more than in its technique. Sweet voice touches the heart Woman's voice is naturally sweeter than that of man. The reason of it is partly physiological character of wind-pipe and other vocal organs But a deeper reason is the natural spirituality of women due to motherhood Motherhood is intrinsically altruistic, and it is spiritualistic by virtue of altruism The intrinsic altruism of motherhood makes it naturally non-egoistic and spiritual It is in the primitive meaningless lullabies of mothers of matriarchal age that music and language developed Music is originally maternal. Language is more intellectual and has developed more definitely and rapidly with the cooperation of intellectual man.

Besides sweetness, clarity of voice is also a quality of speech Clarity is intellectual excellence of voice and is conducive to communication But clarity is also aesthetic It has also a beauty

about it Female speech has both these qualities Male speech is more sonorous and has its beauty more in its volume and depth than in its sharpness. Such beauty of male voice is cultivated in Vedic Sanskrit and is exemplified in modern times by English and other European languages. However both sweetness and clarity constitute two basic aesthetic qualities of voice.

The spirituality of both these qualities can be empirically ascertained Spirit is non-dualistic and spirituality expresses in concrete life in love, affection and affiliating attitude. The affiliating effect of sweet voice is evident. Clear voice affiliates at least intellectually if not emotionally It creates a more definite common understanding than voice which is not clear. Confusion is created by excess of rajas. Sattva makes for clarity. Sattva is close to spirit So clarity is close to spirituality. Sweetness of voice is essentially spiritual Spirit itself speaks in sweet voice. Sweetness is the beauty of voice It endows speech with aesthetic excellence.

Indian tradition has given due importance to both sweetness and clarity as aesthetic qualities of speech. Vedic Sanskrit is endowed both these aesthetic excellences of speech. Vedic hymns are notable for their masculine melody and distinct speech Later Sanskrit also inherits these qualities in some measure Some indistinctness has been introduced in regional languages of north by the effect of Persian. Sanskrit has a special word for clarity of speech 'Shlakshna' which is so difficult to pronounce that clarity of speech is tested in uttering it

The Upanishads, in keeping with their Vedic heritage, recognise and emphasise both these aesthetic qualities of speech. The Shwetashwatara regards 'clarity and composure of speech' as a gift of Yoga,[12] which is spiritual 'Saushthava' signifies the aesthetic character of clarity of and composure of speech. In Taittiriya Upanishad a sage prays that his tongue may be

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12 स्वर सौष्ठव च। श्वे० उप० २-१३

sweet'[13] The recognition of these aesthetic qualities of speech and voice in the ancient Upanishads is remarkable Speech is a secular value, and sweet and clear voice is a most covetable cultural accomplishment for mankind in all times.

### 7. Socio-aesthetic Value

The beauty of life is not confined to the proportionate modulation of a healthy body, efficiency of senses, lustre of the face, cheerful demeanour and sweet voice, which are treated so far as the aesthetic qualities of life It also extends to the social attitude and mental temperament of the conduct of life Man is physically an individual, but the significance of his life is not confined to his individual being Beauty is an organization of parts into a rhythmic whole Such is the beauty of music, painting, sculpture etc The beauty of life also consists in the social rythm of corporate relations and common achievement of cultural glories The Upanishad do recognise the secular values of life, but they do not believe in excessive acquisition of and indulgence in them particularly in regard to luxuries which have come to set the standard of living in modern times. Their emphasis on food is only as a necessary means of life The custom of the period for sages and spiritual students was to beg food-grains, to pick up the remainder from fields and to live on natural (untilled) corn and on fruits and roots All this indicates their simplicity and contentment about secular values This contentment was not only a custom but also a philosophical doctrine It has been prescribed in Isha and other Upanishads Simplicity and contentment of Upanishadic sages border on austerity and touch the fringes of asceticism The common and cooperative acquisition of material values was for common people and not for the sages and spiritual students, who primarily devoted to learning and spiritual enlightenment

The sages of the Upanishads devoted to the acquisition of

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13 जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा । तै० उप० १-४

spiritua learning, moral excellence and spiritual glory along with their disciples. They directed disciples into a practical discipline for it, besides enlightening them intellectually about it as an initial necessity. Unlike modern teachers and students, who live apart and meet only casually in classes the Upanishadic teachers and students lived together a common life of intellectual, moral and spiritual cooperation The disciples were treated much like their sons by teachers who for this reason were called 'kulpati' or patriarchs of their cultural family. They sought the spiritual secret of life in a cooperative cultural endeavour.

Spirit is not an individual thing like body. It lives in the body and is therefore called 'dehi' or Shariraka, but metaphysically its being extends beyond it. It is understood to be one by monists and a common being in all bodies. This of course is a physical approach to a metaphysical reality. In intellectual terms it can be described only negatively as a negation of all cognitive terms which apply to physical entities. Positively it can be realized only in immediate and integral experience which is understood to be blissful. Such an experience, though often sought by seekers in their individual aspiration, is not individualistic in its significance Transcendence of individuality is its fundamental character. Thus it must imply some form of commonness in which individuality and consequent duality is transcended. As the economic welfare of man lies in a commonly just acquisition of wealth and in an equitable distribution of it, so the spiritual well-being of man also consists in a common endeavour for it and in common enjoyment of its fruit

The Upanishads are cognisant of this common truth of spiritual life Though some instructions may appear to be addressed to individual pupils, yet the significance of the spiritual truth is always understood to be non-individual and common. This common significance of spirituality was forgotten in later Vedanta perhaps under incidental individualism of great utterance

like 'I am Brahman', 'thou art that' etc but it is evident in the Upanishadic attitudes both to intellectual learning and spiritual realization. The teacher and disciple learn together and pray for their common welfare, and also for amity of relation in regard to learning They also pray that there may not be any discord or envy between them[14] They pray that they may together attain social dignity and spiritual glory[15] In fact spiritual glory is by its very nature a common benefit It cannot be an individual gain without being shared with others This Upanishadic view exposes the falsity of individual spiritualism of later Vedanta and later Indian tradition.

The social context of learning and spiritual glory reveals the socio-aesthetic dimension of Upanishadic spiritualism A social temper about spiritualism gives an aesthetic grace to the conduct of secular and social life, in which consists the beauty of human life as a social phenomenon. This socio-aesthetic grace is secular in so far as it is a common quality of human conduct in regard to secular values and empirical life, as it is in regard to spiritual discipline.

**8. Psycho-aesthetic excellence**

Socio-aesthetic excellence of life characterised by a social grace is not merely an external behaviour It is based on a psycho-aesthetic excellence which should characterise the mental attitude of persons devoted to spiritual discipline Many ethico-spiritual virtues form the wealth of such a disposition. Faith, truth penance etc. are more notable among them But the consummation of these virtues is to be found in the serene peace of mind and divine bliss of spirit which constitute the supreme cultural excellence of disposition and behaviour of a spiritual person Peace and bliss are cognate characters of supreme spirit according to the Upanishads The Mandukya

14 मा विद्विषाव है ।

15 सह नौ यश । सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम् ।। तै० उप० १-३

though it also reinforces mental peace. Bliss is the character of spirit which is non-dualistic. Hence bliss transcends ego and conflicts caused by it Spirit is immanent also. The glory of bliss permeates the mental attitude and external conduct of man Spirit implies harmony and grace of amity and integration. Peace effects ethico-aesthetic grace of restraint and tolerance in human conduct Bliss endows it with divine delightfulness Peace is like moonlight or morning sunlight It glorifies the environment of life. Bliss is like blossoming of the garden of life, which floods life with its delighting fragrance. Both of them transcend the duality of egoistic conflict and intellectual wrangling which spoil the grace of social and domestic life. The psycho-aesthetic excellence of spiritual discipline and ideal of the Upanishads is a great cultural contribution of Upanishads to the secular, social and cultural life of man. This is the supreme significance of Isha-vashyam, in view of the blissful character of spiritual reality, which makes the first and the last word of truth of the Upanishadic Vedanta.



CHAPTER—XIV

# NEGATIVE VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

## 1. Introductory

We have dealt, so far in the foregoing chapters, with positive secular values among which body, health, food, wealth, sex, action, intellect and sleep seem to have been given due importance in the Upanishads Thesee are secular values in so far as they concern with the common worldly and empirical life of man. There is nothing transcendental about them Common worldly man understands and appreciates them. That the Upanishads intend integration of these secular values with the supreme spiritual principle of existence does not deprive them of their secularity but only elevates them to higher spiritual altitudes The secular dimension of these values remains intact in their integration with spiritual principle, a new dimension of spirituality is integrated in their poorly secular character and enhances their axiological quality and content. These are positive secular values in the sense that these are sought to be acquired and attained by every man and are not sought to be avoided or averted by him. Every man aspires to acquire food, health, wealth, sleep etc Only with the spiritual attitude intended in the Upanishads, these positive secular values are to be sought with restraint and moderation, and are not to be coveted without control and discrimination as unrestrained nature would desire to do

Negation is an actual or ideal opposition of positive being Denying or being deprived of a positive value is an actual negation of it Ideal negation is a mental intention or a linquistic proposition containing such negation Negation of a positive value may create such a morbid state in life that it may assume a positive appearance merely by virtue of intensity of its effect

Darkness which is only an absence of positive light is argued by some Indian philosophers to be a positive entity for the reason indicated above So also sickness, poverty, fear etc. seem to be positive. Negative values also have some characteristics and qualities though these may be undesirable hence not sought for by any person. But these give negative values a semblance of positiveness But the real test of positivity consists in the desirability of a value and the qualities which characterise it. Application of this test will expose the negativity of undesirable values

All values which are undesired and generally not sought for by people are to be taken as negative values. This however, applies only to secular, natural and empirical values, and not to supra-natural, moral or spiritual values The latter are not duly appreciated by many people and consequently not sought for widely Yet it may be observed that though not commonly sought for, the excellence of these values is usually recognised even by those who do not seek them and proves their positiveness Really negative values are only those which are not considered desirable by any body.

Such negative values may be numerous in life. The Upanishads embody a highly positive view of both secular and spiritual life Hence they are very scantily negative It is only on a few occasions that the ephemerality of worldly values is exposed in them in the context of the enduring value of spirituality. This exposure is also not so much a negation as an indication of the limitation of secular values which is evident even to the most secular man. Except for this limitation, Upanishads are very positive even about secular values. Their general outlook of life is positive They urge a man to live well in a secular way but also to seek spiritual salvation with it, to avoid frustration which is inevitable in a merely secular life

So on account of their positive attitude towards life, we find in them scarce mention of negative values. There is not

such wailing over the temporariness of human existence and suffering in it as dominates Buddhism and by its influence later systems of Indian philosophy. Budhism originated in the effect of negative values of senility sickness and death on the tender mind of prince Siddhartha, which was unadjusted to these common woes of life in his protected life in the palace. The Vedanta of Upasishads originated in the realization of the positive spiritual being of man by the ancient sages of India They had vision of it in their simple contented life in the forest hermitages in which they sought the truth of life with their disciples who lived with them like their sons Both the life and the view of life of the sages of Upanishads was not only normal but so positive and sound that there was no scope for exaggeration of negative values which are actual in life but which are not to be dilated upon and converted into exaggerated obsessions but to be tolerated and overcome by attending to positive values It is a philosophical injustice to accuse Upanishads of pessimism, as has been done by some Western critics They embody a most wholesome optimism complemented by a realistic spiritualism in which negative values are overcome to the utmost and positive secular values are immensely enhanced in axiological quality and content

Among the negative secular values which are more considerable in life and which find some significant recognition in the Upanishads three are more notable They are suffering, fear and death. Suffering is physical pain and mental anguish Every one naturally seeks to avert it and aspires positive happiness There is no such exaggerated obsession of suffering in the Upanishads as is to be found in Buddhism and by its influence in later systems of Indian philosophy Slight mention of suffering or dukha is to be found in the Upanishads and that also with possibilities of its termination in a transcendent state of life No where in the Upanishads suffering is dilated upon as the fate or destiny of man, as is done by pessimists Even the fact of suffering which is a matter of common expe-

rience is not emphasised in the Upanishads as the sages were more interested in its transcendence. Suffering in physical and mental Perhaps it had very little scope in the simple and healthy forest life of the sages Indians of older generations testified to the truth of this scantiness of suffering in life. They kept fit till very old age Their mental attitude also was healthy and did not incline towards morbidity which makes for mental suffering A positive moral and pious attitude enhanced their tolerance of suffering. Hence they looked more devotedly to a spiritual discipline in life which negative suffering could be surmounted and overcome in a healthy and wholesome state of living.

Fear is an apprehension of suffering and of other undesirable possibilities of life. It involves hypothetical feeling of suffering also but in itself it is more of an apprehension than an actuality Unpleasant past experience may cause fear by revival of apprehensions Suffering is a natural fact of life but fear is a mental idea or complex. Psychology isolates it as an instinct associated with apprehension to one's existence or well-being. Fear of death is most terrible. The Upanishads talk of fear at a few places in a general way. It may be associated with danger to anything in life. Fear of death became prominent in later Indian thought Upanishads also refer to fear of death But as they are more seriously concerned with conquest of death, they scantily refer to fear itself. More important references to fear are found in the context of fearlessness which is the characteristic of spiritual realization. A very significant reference to fear is found in the parable of Prajapati who felt afraid because he was lonely before the evolution of the world of multiplicity. Here a very serious and sound analysis of fear is given with its cause in alienation This analysis correlates the fearlessness of spiritual realization which implies intimate affiliation in terms of social relations, and discovers the empirical efficacy of the latter in overcoming fear in life.

Death is the supreme negative value in life. It is the negation of life. It is the greatest nihilator of man's existence It

is a fact of common experience that death destroys the empirical being of man This fact affords the popular major promise of the Aristotelian syllogism When it comes unexpectedly or premaurely, it terrifies a man and his kins. Man naturally loves to live Being is the intrinsic and ultimate category of life The sight of a dead man disillusioned the Buddha about life. There are some sad scenes of death in the Vedas But the Upanishads do not dilate upon fearfulness of death. They seriously seek to transcend it Transmigration affords a hope of new life and death becomes only a turning point in the endless series of lives So death, in Indian view, loses the fierceness of finality The Upanishads condemn those persons who see duality in life, but that means transmigration which can be taken as renewed life, though the Upanishads take it as repetition of deaths The quest of the Upanishads is for a solution of death which they find in immortal spiritual being The Upanishadic discovery of the spiritual reality of existence and life finds the final solution of death and reveals the deepest and highest secret of life

**2. Suffering in the Upanishads**

Suffering is a simple general and evident fact of life It is the basic fact and the ultimate problem of life Every philosophy should recognise the unpleasant fact of suffering and should also find a solution of it, though very few philosophies, particularly of the West, have done it Western philosophies have mostly tended to become metaphysical and epistemological. They have largely been engaged in thinking about ultimate reality and about implications of knowledge It is only some modern Western philosophers particularly of the continent like Schopenhauer, Hartmann etc who emphasised suffering in life But they overemphasised it and concluded with an obsessive pessimism They did not also find any solution of it Due to the traditional impact of ontological metaphysics of West, they only confirmed suffering at the ultimate fact of life The outcome of such philosophies is that recognition of suffering leads to an affirmation of it as ulti-

mate destiny of life. Such a philosophy is a highly depressing pessimism, in which there is no hope of redemption and salvation.

Modern existential philosophy also concludes with a similarly depressing pessimism. It asserts man's 'pour soil' existence as the supreme axiological reality but it does not enable man to find satisfactory content for it in life. Man's life according to it becomes a constant nihilation of existence which he assumes as possible content at a stage. Man goes on nihilating his existence without finding any affirmative and enduring content of his being.

The problem of suffering is a crucial and difficult problem of life Thinking cannot easily succeed in finding a solution of it The fact of suffering seems to be inevitable and insurmountable Suffering finds confirmation in feeling and consciousness, and appears inconquerable. Hence many Western and Indian philosophies have endeavoured to find satisfactory solution of suffering Charvaka Hedonism leads to a natural and inevitable pessimism. Vedic optimism is founded on cultural spiritualism It does not dilate much on the fact of suffering. On the other hand it devised and developed a spontaneous cultural spiritualism embellished with sacrificial, ritual, musical prayers and sacrifices in the cultural complex of which sufferings of life could certainly be minimized and even overcome to a large extent The Upanishads inherit the Vedic optimism, though they discount the value of cultural spiritualism and become speculative and seek a deeper solution of suffering. This speculative quest for a solution of suffering continued in later systems of Indian philosophy. The Upanishads, under the influence of Vedic optimism do not emphasise suffering and are not obsessed by it like the later philosophical systems They are more inclined towards discovering a solution of suffering

Among the later systems, Buddhism is most pessimistic. Buddhism begins with Buddha's renunciation at the sight of

suffering suggested by a sick man, an old man and a dead man As Buddha was strictly protected from the sight of suffering he was unusually impressed and obsessed by it His declaration that 'all is suffering' which became the motto of Buddhism, is a reaction of such unusual effect of suffering Buddhistic analysis of experience naturally found no inner content in experience and no substance in life All is suffering and all is fleeting Logically life should be regarded as a stream of suffering and emptiness. This in itself is a profound cause of deep suffering, though Buddhism regards realization of it as a final solution of all suffering Buddhism is a negative pessimism It does not afford any positive solution of suffering. It finds the end of suffering in realization of emptiness of ego and existence (by whom ?) Jainism, strangely enough augments, at least apparently the suffering of life by voluntary imposition of suffering It is an extreme ascetism But it finds a positive solution of suffering in a state of beatitude Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika and Mimansa find the cause of suffering in one's identification of his being with body and ego. This identification is due to ignorance of reality of the real Ignorance, and suffering due to it, can be removed by knowledge of true self This true self according to Samkhya and Yoga is pure objectless consciousness in which suffering is transcended Nyaya, Vaisheshika and Minamsa do not regard consciousness as the real character of self Consciousness is contingent on birth. Consciousness ceases in the final state of realization and with it suffering also ends These systems of Indian philosophy do not exaggerate suffering like Buddhism, but they do not emphasise it much more than the Upanishads and make suffering and cessation of it the cardinal question of their inquiry The Upanishads duly recognise the fact of suffering But they do not emphasise it much They are more concerned with death which is the greatest tragedy of life and with the transistoriness of pleasures of life, which is mainely due to mortality of man. There is no dominance of the idea of pain and suffering in the Upanishads as it is found in Buddhism, and

other non-Vedantic systems of Indian philosophy. On the other hand there is delightful flavour of pleasures of life in the Upanishads, though these are found to be ephemeral. The positive secular values described in the earlier chapters are all conducive to pleasure in life. Health, wealth, sex, progeny etc are duly appreciated in Upanishads and afford evidence of moderate optimism of the sages There is no wailing pessimism in the Upanishads as is found in Buddhism or in Vaisheshika. But the Upanishadic optimism is not indulgent. On the other hand it is marked by a strain of sadness over the ephemerality of sensory and secular pleasures The suffering of senility and death is severely felt. The Upanishads are inclined towards overcoming this suffering of life rather than towards enjoying the temporary pleasures in the spirit of Omar Khayyam 'with a loaf of bread, a flask of wine and thou beside me singing'. Even the more enduring pleasures of paradise are not found to be sufficiently fascinating in the Upanishads Nachiketa discounts them, in the Katha Upanishad, due to their ephemerality and the mortality of human existence

Nachiketas declares in the Katha Upanishads that the pleasures of senses lead only to weariness of the bodily energies[1] These pleasures are temporary.[2] Life is so short that no body can be happy even by enjoying them in the whole of life.[3] But except for the keen recognition of transitoriness of life and sensory pleasures of it, there is not much mention of suffering in the Uapnisrads The term 'dukha' occurs in them very rarely particularly in the context of suffering as the character of life It occurs more frequently in the context of transcendence of suffering in spiritual immortality. The Atman is understood to

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1 सर्वेन्द्रियाणा जरयन्ति तेज । कठ उप० १-१-२६

2 श्वो भावा । कठ उप० १-१-२६

3 नातिदीर्घे जीविते को रमेत । कठ १-२-२८

be unaffected by worldly suffering[4] Those who realize the spirit enjoy eternal peace and happiness[5] One who is established in self-realization is not affected by disease, senility and death, according to the Shwetashvatara Upanishad. The Chhandogya Upanishad also regards the seer of self as one who becomes above the cognition of death, diseases and suffering.[6]

The Upanishads are hedonistic in so far as they regard the supreme spirit negatively beyond all suffering but positively blissful and consider the realization of Blissful spirit as the supreme goal of life But Upanishadic hedonism is spiritual and not empirical and sensory like the Greek Epicureanism or the modern Utilitarianism of the Western Ethics It is in this spiritual hedonism that the Upanishads find the cessation of all sufferings The spirit is transcendent in nature As transcendent it is above all empirical modes of being, including pain and suffering It is not a negation of the empirical fact of suffering, but a transcendental solution of it

Suffering is an undesirable fact of life. Buddha and others were right to recognise it The Upanishads also deny it, but they do not emphasise it, though they keenly seek a transcendental solution of it. Suffering is painful consciousness It is a feeling of physical or mental pain which eclipses and obstructs all other pleasant feelings Cognitive consciousness is a flowing stream on which objects flow like waves. Consciousness of suffering or pain is fixating rather than flowing It sticks on a point which is unpleasant and does not seem to move Perhaps this static character of consciousness in suffering aggravates it as it creates a tension

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4 एकस्तथासर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदु खेन वाह्य ।

कठ २-२-११

5 तेपा सुखं शास्वतम् । श्वे० ६-१२

6 न पश्यो मृत्यु पश्यति न रोगं नोत दु खता । छा० उप० ७-२६-२

in the flowing stream of consciousness. The truth of this idea is easily ascertained when a suffering man's attention is diverted by others through talk etc. to other ideas One feels a reduction in suffering when sympathetic people come to meet him. Both physical suffering and mental sorrow are reduced thereby

Thus suffering seems to be a psychological stalmate between flowing cognitive consciousness which is neutral and spiritual superconsciousness which is transcendent as well as flowing and is blissful. The bliss of spirit is not sensory or even mental plea sure Such pleasure is empirical and evanscent. Bliss is transcendent and enduring As transcendent it transcends suffering also. The sympathy of friends does not reduce suffering merely by cognitive diversion It does so more effectively by spiritual non-duality. Therefore the sympathy of those who are nearer and dearer and more sincere is more effective in reducing pain of a suffering person. Therefore, the Upanishads believe that suffering cannot be removed without knowing the supreme spirit[7] All suffering is absorbed in the infinite blissfulness of supreme spirit and realization of it

### 3. Fear in Upanishads

Fear is not exactly suffering but is akin to it. It is an unpleasant and undesirable as suffering. Suffering is obviously painful. The pain of fear is not so obvious, as it is not sensory. Fear implies a subtler form of suffering. Suffering or pain affects and damages a particular part of our being. But fear damages our whole being and diminishes it suddenly. Psychology regards fear as an instinct or a natural feeling given to all living beings It is associated with the security of life and aroused generally when there is a danger to it. Thus it can be regarded as a protective mechanism of body, at least negatively. But fear is unpleasant and undesirable. No body wants and welcomes it. Everybody is afraid of fear and wants to avert it. So far it is akin to suffering.

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7 श्वे० उप० ६-२०

Like suffering fear also involves consciousness Sometimes it can be vague and without any direction towards a definite object of fear as for example child's fear in darkness or loneliness But generally it is aroused by a definite object or situation which is cognised to be dangerous to one's existence The danger may be minor or major and the degree and character of fear will be determined accordingly.

Fear may be a temporary or sometimes even more lasting negation of man's being It is a common and empirical fact of life. Thus it is a negative secular value It is wider in scope and significance than suffering. The negation implied in suffering is not always so wide Often it is limited But the negation implied in fear is wider as it pertains to the general existence of man. It is less than the negation of death which is total and final Death is the cause of greatest fear in life It effects absolute nihilation of man's being Death has been treated seriously and with greater indulgence by the Upanishads It will be discussed in the next section of this chapter

The Upanishadic treatment of fear is remarkable in many respects It reveals the deeper secret of fear and also discovers a deeper solution of it This solution is spiritual as it is in case of suffering Spirit is immutable, indestructible and transcendent of all empirical modes of mutation. Hence it is above fear also The realization of spirit absorbs and overcomes all fear like all suffering The person who attains spiritual bliss does not fear anything

The Upanishads present a deep and revealing analysis of fear The principle on which this analysis is based is spiritual though it accommodates the psychological thesis of fear as the organic reflection of spiritual cause of fear The psychological theories are not only indequate, they are also not useful in controlling fear Biological theories like those of James and Lange consider fear as nervous reflex, which can be according to them,

controlled by external behaviour. You are afraid, because you run. You do not run and fear will disappear. But in fact biological reflexes of emotions are uncontrollable Fear is a biological and nervous reflex. Hence it is difficult to control. All control is by moral will, which is a regulating force above bio-psychological drives. Moral will is transcendent of the bio-psychological impulsions. The latter are natural and inevitable. Moral will is spiritual by virtue of its transcendence and altruism Altruism implies non-dualism which is the secret of spirituality. Duality is rooted in individuality which is the character of natural, biological and psychological being It is dominant in animals and is evident in men also so far as they are not able to overcome it in spiritual non-dualism

The Upanishadic analysis of fear is represented by the parable of Prajapati contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Prajapati represents the original divine being who is the father of all creatures. As he is the creator of all creatures there could be no creatures there before he created them. Hence he was alone He felt afraid in his solitude.[8] As Prajapati the original father of man felt afraid in loneliness, so man also feels afraid when he is alone.[9] But the Upanishad raises a very relevant question in this context You feel afraid only of the other per-question in this context. You feel afraid only of the other person.[10] When Prajapati was alone and there was no other creature besides him, of whom was he afraid ? Logically and psychologically there is no answer to this question But Prajapati felt afraid in loneliness and man also feels afraid when he is alone The loneliness which, according to the Upanishad, is the basic cause of fear is not so much factual as relational. It is not so much physical solitude as psychol-spiritual isolation One can feel

8 सोऽविभेत् । वृह० उप० १-४-२

9 तस्मादेकाकी विभेति । वृह० उप० १-४-२

10 द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति । वृह० उप० १-४-२

lonely at heart even when he is not physically alone. Modern man feels lonely in the crowds of cities One can feel lonely in family if he feels alienated from his kins Physical loneliness is an empirical and external fact But real loneliness is an inner experience of isolation and alienation from others. So the secret of fear, according to the Upanishads, lies in inner feeling of loneliness Prajapati was afflicted by it because he was absolutely lonely, both physically and psychologically. It was not so much the feeling of loneliness as a lack of spiritual joy of non-duality which was the cause of Prajapati's fear

Fear is a negative experience of negation of being It is a reflection of the lack of spiritual bliss, which according to the Upanishads, is the positive content of man's being Spirit is non-dualistic Non-duality is an inner integrality promoted by affiliation and lack of alienation It is a unity-in-difference in which difference is effectively overcome in unity. This spiritual bliss of non-duality is transcendent of fear. Realization of spirit is identified with absence of fear in Upanishads, non-duality is an inner integrality in duality which is presumed by it Prajapati was in a state of physical loneliness and metaphysical monotony There was no other besides him of whom he should have been afraid and with whom he could enjoy the bliss of affiliation and spiritual non-duality So Prajapati's fear was not a fear of danger from other person as there was no other person in that primordeal state of existence It was a negative reflection, on his being, of lack of the bliss of spiritual non-duality and lack of unity of affiliation which could not be possible in absolute loneliness.

So the fear which a man feels is also not exactly a fear of mere loneliness but it is primarily a reflection of lack of spiritual non-duality on the being of man It is only secondarily that it is fear of imaginary (or possible) danger from another person A child does not feel afraid of its parents. It

is scared of strangers. Man feels afraid of a stranger whom he meets on a lonely way. The reason of it is duality evident in strangtness and consequent alienation or presumption of lack of affiliation which makes for non-duality. Neither a child nor an adult feels afraid of those persons with whom he has familiarity and affiliation. Even in physical loneliness or darkness one feels afraid only if one lacks in the strength of bliss which is afforded by affiliation and affectionate relationship, which imply spiritual non-duality. The move is one endowed with the strength of spirituality, the less fear one feels in loneliness and even in face of express dangers.

Fear like suffering is also a conscious phenomenon. It is not neutral like cognition. It is negative and has a minus value as it contracts or reduces the being of man by threatening it with real or imaginary danger. Man's normal being is a complex of unconscious, neutral cognitive consciousness, negative nihilating consciousness, positive hedonic consciousness and blissful super-consciousness. The latter is the foundation of man's existence which supports other modes of man's being. Fear emphasises and exaggerates the negative consciousness of nihilation of being and eclipses other modes of being. It is only in the blissful super-consciousness that a strong and effective defense against nihilation of fear can be secured. The creation of diverse beings to enjoy with by Prajapati, who felt afraid in loneliness, indicates the Upanishadic spiritual theory of fearlessness. Fear is transcended in the exuberance of blissful spiritual being which is the anti-pole of reduction of being in fear. Fear is an accentuation of negative nihilating consciousness which implies a severe undoing of man's existence. It is counter-acted in and also concurrently with the fearful situation by the spiritual non-duality and consequent blissful being acquired by a person.

The treatment of fear is found only in one Upanishad i.e. the Brihadaranyaka, though this single citation contains the substance of the Upanishadic theory of fear. Besides this scarce

references to fear are traceable in the Upanishads, as are the references to suffering The Upanishads are dominated not by an empirical pessimism but by a spiritual optimism. As in case of suffering the Upanishads are more concerned with the secret of blissful being which transcends suffering. So in case of fear they are more devoted to discovering the secret of fearlessness A rare reference to the fear of death is found in the Chhandogya Upanishad.[11] But numerous references to fearlessness are to be found in the Upanishads Fear is the negation of being which finds its abundance in super-conscious bliss The spirit is characterized by fearlessness, because it is imperishable Immortality of spirit makes for its fearlessness. The Prashna Upanishad describes the spirit as immortal and fearless[12] The Taittiriya Upanishad understands the state of spiritual realization as a state of fearlessness[13] and declares that the person who knows the spirit is not afraid of anything[14] The Chhandogya Upanishad also understands the spirit as immortal and fearless[15] One who realizes the spirit enters the immutable, immortal and fearless state of being[16] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also regards the spirit as immortal[17] and fearless[18] It asserts that one who knows the spirit becomes im-

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11 देवा वै मृत्योर्बिभ्यतः । छा० उप० १-४-२

12 अमृतमभय परं चेति । प्रश्न उप० ५-७

13 अथ सोऽभय गतो भवति । तै० उप० २-७

14 आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न बिभेति कुतश्चन । तै० उप० २-९

15 एतदमृतमभयमेतद्ब्रह्मे ति । छा० उप० ८-८-३

16 स य एतदेवं विद्वानक्षरं प्रणौत्येतदेवाक्षर स्वरं अमृतमभयं प्रविशति ।
छा० उप० १-४-५

17 त आत्मान्तर्याम्यमृत । बृह० ३-७-३

18 स वा एष आत्मा अजरोऽमरोऽमृतोऽभयो ब्रह्माभयम् ।
बृह० उप० ४-४-५

mortal and fearless.[19] King Janaka is recognised as one who had realized the immortal spirit and consequently as one who had attained the state of fearlessness.[20]

Thus the nihilating threat to a man's being is the essence of fear and it expresses in the accentuation of consequent nihilating consciousness. It is denuding man's being of all content, significance, meaning and value. Fearlessness is the opposite of it. It consists in the abundance of blissful being which reveals in non-duality and social affiliation. It conquers fear and ensures fearlessness even in situations of grave danger. Even fear of death is transcended in it. Death may come as a natural destiny of bodily being. But it causes no anxiety or fear in a person who is entrenched in abundant blissful being of spiritual realization.

The Upanishadic theory of fear and fearlessness is considerably cogent and its validity can be verified in actual experience of life. It is highly significant and useful in the context of present civilization which is making man keenly conscious of his loneliness due to lack of spiritual non-duality and social affiliation, and which is making man more afraid of his own emptiness than of any specific cause of fear. The child is afraid of loud noise and is also scared by strange things and persons. His fear reduces as he makes familiar with things and persons. It can be experimentally asceratined that a child who is given and cultivates more spiritual non-duality in early life develops greater courage and feels less afraid in loneliness and other fearful situations Cultivation of fearlessness is an important task in life It has been the task of civilization also. Primitive and barbarous society must have been very insecure. Development of civilization is marked with growth of security and

19 अभयं वै ब्रह्म भवति य एव वेद। बृह० उप० ४-४-५

20 अभयं वै जनक प्राप्तोऽसि। बृह० उप० ४-२-४

increased in civilization. But still deeper contribution is of personal affiliation and spiritual non-duality afforded by man to man in general and by parents and kins to children Implicit trust is the truth of civilization and the secret of human life and social relations

But it is a tragedy of modern civilization that loneliness and fear are increasing and reducing the content and meaning of man's life Existential philosophy has emerged as the philosophical voice of the predicament of man. Civilization has tended to be dominated by externalism i e. by growth of luxurious means of life, and by sensationalism which also is a externalistic hedonism i.e. hedonism based on the pleasure afforded by objects through senses The spiritual bliss of non-dualism which overcomes subtle fear of lonely being is being ignored in the commercial business, locomotive haste and fascinations of external luxuries The root of spiritual non-dualism lies in family Maternal and paternal affection is the original form of it Sensationalism is turning marriage in a copular romance in which the domestic dimension of filial affections is being ignored. Regimental breeding of children is increasing Hence children suffer from a lack of spiritual non-dualism from early life This lack makes them more lonely at heart and more susceptible to fear in life.

Education is a privilege of civilization But education has come to be largely acquisition of intellectual knowledge It develops consciousness of man But there is little provision in education for promoting spiritual non-duality. With education and science, industry is growing. Industrialization leads to urbanization Cities, with large populations, are growing Man finds himself lost in the crowded cities, where there are more strangers than acquaintances Urban crowds are like saline oceans where there is no water to drink If man does not feel afraid in these crowded cities, it is due administrative order and security. He feels an impersonal spiritual non-duality also

with the indifferent (i e. not hostile) crowds, though not a personal and intimate affiliation with many persons, the lack of which makes him more susceptible to fears in his lonely life

The fear of war and of annihilation has also increased with science and civilization War also is due to lack of spiritual non-duality among men, which is the primary cause of conflict and fear. Spirit is harmonic and peaceful. A cultivation of spiritual discipline in domestic social, international and personal life alone can make man internally fearless and can rid human society of collossal and cosmic dangers which aggravate fear in human life.

**4. Death in the Upanishads**

Death is the greatest suffering in life. It is the most fearful thing in life also. The pain of death is difficult to describe and understand as one who suffers it in actual life is not in a position to describe it and others cannot imagine it until they come to face it in that ineffable state Death is the most disastrous event in man's life It destroys his being and ends his very existence Death is the end of life. It is the opposite of life and a complete negation of life. It is the greatest nihilator. There may be many partial and relaive negations of man's existence. Suffering is a partial damage to life. Even fear is mostly temporary challenge to one's being There is hope of recovery from suffering and fear. But there is no hope in and after death. Hence the fact and idea of death has been the cause of greatest pessimism in philosophy. Common people keep engaged in activities and avert the thought of death by occupation, as Robert Louis Stevenson reveals in his famous essay on 'Aes Triplex.' They surrender to death when it comes as an inevitable destinf and die helplessly. There is no use thinking about death. It is worse, as death cannot be averted by thinking It cannot be thought away. On the other hand thinking of death makes even life melancholy and miserable Hence it is wiser not to think of death and enjoy life till it is possible to do That is what a common man does.

But philosophers do not so much live life as do they think about it. They think of all possible aspects of life. They have thought about death also. Philosophers of West were more occupied with metaphysics epistamology and ethics Reality, knowledge and conduct were their main interests It is only modern existentialists who have seriously turned their thought towards death Their main concern is with the existence of man and they find death to be the greatest nihilator of man's existence. They find death inevitable It is so But their thinking about death reflects darkly on life Thought of death robs even present existence and life of all meaning and value Omar Khayyam c delusion also can be resored in life, that if life is transitory let us enjoy it as much and as far as possible But there can be another attitude to life also according to which it is futile to enjoy if all this is going to end in absolute nihilation by death, or at least if it is not futile to enjoy a while in face of death, it may not be very satisfying to enjoy with the sword of death hanging over our head

Common man may avert the idea of death by keeping himself occupied with activities of life, but philosophers must think about death seriously Western philosophy does not seem to be touched by the problem of death. It is a serious omission on the part of a serious profession like philosophy. Modern existential philosophy is fully justified in emphasising life and, with it, death in its contemplations That it cannot find a way to overcome fear of death is a natural limitation of thought. Death is inevitable, unavoidable and inconquerable. Still existentialism urges man to face death boldly though it is difficult to do it To face it courageously is all that can be possible for man Many people practically do so. Particularly in India many people accept the destiny of death coolly and gracefully.

Indian philosophy has been occupied with the problem of death from its very beginnings in the Upanishads Even the jubilant optimism of Vedas is not without its shadow of death. The

ancient India keenly cognised the fact of death The Vedic sages fumbled to find a solution of death It was only the Upanishadic sages who discovered the spiritual secret of life and with it a spiritual solution of death in the form of spiritual way of attaining immortality. Indian mythology also devised several means of overcoming the ultimate effect of death. Transmigration, birth in other worlds and paradise of immutable and prolonged existence are notable among them Transmigration is a series of lives of the same soul. The body is perishable by death but the soul is immortal and assumes new bodies in rebirth. Soul is the enduring identity of a person. Thus transmigration is a partial conquest of death in so far as death destroys only the body and not the soul which survives and is reborn There are many worlds besides this and rebirth can be possible in any of them according to merit of one's deeds. Paradise is a realm of axcellent and highly prolonged life of youthful and unaging existence: It is a celestial life of pleasure, luxuries, ambrosia, nector, angels, and nymphs. The paradise may be a mere ideal of human fancy. But rebirth and other worlds are most probably true. They are a partial consolation against the destructive tyranny of death.

The Upanishads recognise all these three mythological fortifications against death. Transmigration is treated as an implicit principle of life in several statements which deal with action and their fruit The Katha Upanishad regards man as a crop which grows and ripens[21] The cycle of birth and death implies transmigration.[22] Rebirth is literally mentioned in a statement of Upanishad on which is based the last sutra of the Brahmasutras.[23] The other worlds are referred to in the Upanishad in

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21 सस्यमिव मर्त्यं पच्यते सस्यमिवाजायते पुनः । क० उप० १-१-६

22 मृत्यो स मृत्युमाप्नोति ।

23 न स पुनरावर्तते. । बृह० उप० ६-२-१५
अनावृत्ति. शब्दात् । ब्रह्म सूत्र ४-४

connection with the fruit of actions. These regions are attained according to the nature of actions and are not enduring. The duration of a man's stay in them is limited by law of actions When the merit of a man is exhausted he is reborn on this earth, as the Gita asserts[24] Our earth is called the region of mortality (martyaloka) as life here is short and ends in death Other regions are also not eternal but life there is longer in duration. These regions are higher and lower, pleasant and painful and are given according to deeds of persons

Paradise is a realm of youth and pleasure It is also not eternal but life there is unaging and so long that it is taken to approximate immortality. But when merit is exhausted a person is transferred from it to the earth[25] The whole region of paradise also is dissolved in the cosmic dissolution[26] Yama offers paradise to Nalhiketas in the Katha Upanishad and describes it as a region in which man is not affiliated by disease, decay, old age and death[27] Youthful enjoyment of pleasure and arts of life like dance and music is the only occupation in paradise Youth in paradise is undecaying Romantic life of celestial beings with divine damsels is the dream of earthly man whose short-lived youth is affilicted with the threat of decay

These three modes of meeting death are not satisfying to the Upanishads They take the fact of death so seriously that these modes appear to them as only a provisional evasion of death Transmigration is a cycle of death, rebirth and death. The longer or happier stay in other regions or paradise is also only

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24 क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोक व्रिशन्ति । गीता

25 क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यं लोक विशन्ति । गीता

26 आभूतसम्प्लवस्थानममृतत्वमिहोच्यते ।

27 स्वर्गे लोके न भय किंचनास्ति, न तत्र त्वं न जरया विभेति ।

क० उप० १-१-१२

a longer delusion which ultimately ends with the same destisy of death. The Upanishads are not pessimistic as they do not exaggerate the sufferings of life or fear of death. Nor do they condemn man to suffer mortality as an inevitability as Schopenhaur and modern existentialists seem to do They take death as a serious and severe fact of life and seek a satisfactory metaphysical solution of it. The transitorinness of life and the fact of death is recognised in several statements of the Upanishads. The Isha Upanishads ends with an account of a dying person[28] In the Katha Upanishad Nachiketas declares life as a short stay on the earth.[29] Man is the food of death and divoured by it[30] One who sees duality and diversity goes from death to death.[31] The Prashna Upanishads refers to death as a most severe suffering in life[32] The Chhandogya Upanishad describes the fear of death, and considers bodily existence as mortal[33] The Brihadaranyaka regards primeval existence as covered with death[34] and sees the cause of death in hunger.[35] It also treats weariness due to labour as the cause of death[36] These, of course are causes of decay and consequent death. The sages in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad pray to God to lead them from death to immortality.[37] They see all

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28 ईशा० उप० १७, १८

29 जीवितमल्पमेव । क० उप० १-१-२६

30 सर्वं मृत्योरन्नम् । छा० ३-२-१०

31 मृत्यो स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति । कठ० उप० २-१-१०

32 मृत्युः परिव्यथा । प्रश्न ६-६

33 मर्त्यं वा इदं शरीरम् । छा० उप० ८-१२-१

34 मृत्युनैंदमावृतमासीत् । बृह० उप० १-२-१

35 अशनाया हि मृत्युः । बृह० उप० १-२-१

36 मृत्यु· श्रमो भूत्वा । बृह० उप० १-५-२१

37 मृत्यो मा अमृतं गमय ।

existence enveloped by death and it is truly so.[38] As Shankara explains in his commentary life is bondage and bondage is death[39] Immortality is freedom of being Bound person transmigrates, tranmigration involves death.[40] Immortality belongs to integral spiritual being which is non-dualistic Death prevails so far as there is seen duality[41] One who sees duality in life, goes from death to death[42]

The Upanishad do not merely cognise and confirm the fact of death as an inevitable destiny of man. They also explore the cause and character of it and in the light of this exploration seek a way of attaining a state of being which is beyond death as it transcends the causes and conditions of mortality Statements which confirm and confer immortality upon man abound in the Upanishads They are numerous and confirm that the greater interest of Upanishads is in immortality rather than in death. Death is referred to only as a reason on account of which quest and attainment of immortality is necessary The sages of Upanishads are so deeply concerned with death that they consider even attainment of higher worlds and of heaven as temporary illusions by which one should not be tempted They seek immortal existence which will never be touched by death

The Upanishadic idea of death and immortality can be understood in terms of time and duality which are the main causes of death according to them Life means bodily existence of man, which comes into being with birth and hence is bound to perish

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38 मृत्युनैदमा वृतमासीत् । बृह० उप० १-२-१

39 वन्धनरूपस्य मृत्यो । बृह० उप० ३-२-१

40 येन वा वद्ध· ससरति स मृत्यु । बृह० उप० ३-३-१

41 आद्वैतक्षयात् सर्वं मृत्यु. । बृह० उप० ३-२-१

42 मृत्यो स मृत्यु माप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति । क० उप० २-१-१०

in death, as the Gita says,[43] life is enclosed in terms of time with two terminations as birth and death. Life is a limited course in time. Time in itself is a cosmic order, course and process which goes on endlessly and which devours everything in the universe. Time is a great destroyer. It is the cardinal cause of death, hence time signified death also in Sanskrit lexican. The course of time moves towards death and every moment of time marks it. The temporal course of death assumes several forms in life. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has defined them as hunger, labour, bondage, evil and unreality. Hunger is want. Want is negation and so is death. Reality is wantless Labour is weariness as it consumes energy. Reality is unwearing and inexhaustible. Bondage is limitation Reality is unlimited. Limitation is death Bondage consists in being bound to the temporal course of life and universe. Reality is infinite blissful being. Death is unreality i e. cessation of being and bliss.

Time and negation of being are the two main principles of death according to the Upanishadic analysis. Time signifies transitoriness. Death is termination of being in which transitoriness culminates. In a way we can understand it as a constant process of decay which only ends in death Time may be taken to mark momentary being. But on deeper analysis like that of Bdddha it may reveal nothingness. The Upanishads discover the secret of immortality not in temporal existence but in the vision of spiritual reality which transcends it. Time is undoubtedly a dimension of reality, which has a dynamic aspect.[44] But it is not the whole of reality. Reality transcends time and movement. It is not affected by them Hence it is immutable, eternal and immortal The mortal world is a quarter of it and three quarters of it is transcendent.[45] Reality is not being like death but it is the highest being. It is blissful being. Bliss is ever-

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43 जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युः । गीता

44 तदेजते । ईश०

lasting happiness and joy. It is not evanscent like sensory pleasures. It does not decline, decay and diminish It means that it is not affected by the fatal process of time It is immortal.

It is in this blissful *being as the supreme* reality of existence and life, which is *transcendent* of time and mutation, that the Upanishads discover the secret of immortality. This blissful reality is the source and sustenance of existence. It is the core of human existence All beings live by a fraction of it. Man's body is material, mutable and perishable in death But if a man realizes his deeper blissful being and identifies his existence with it, he attains immortality. Immortality is a non-corporeal being and experience. It is a blissful experience unaffected by laws of time, decay and death It is spiritual as distinguished from bodily and sensory pleasure Bodily being is dualistic. Spiritual reality and bliss is non-dualistic. Death is dualistic, as Shankar had explained in his commentary upon Brihadaranyaka.[47] Death pervades till dualism is transcended.[48] Duality is *physical* and *involves decomposition* which leads to death. Spiritual reality is integral and non-dualistic It does not decompose and die Death is decay Spiritual reality is abundant and increasing It is thus the opposite of decadent physical being. Hence it is immortal. It is the core of man's being and is realizable by man through penance contemplation, meditation etc. Realization of spiritual reality is attainment of immortality for man. It is extremely difficult in life due to its physical limitations and temptation, but it is possible in life. This possibility is the deepest secret and greatest truth of life which the sages of Upanishads discovered in those ancient times.

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45 स विश्व परितो वृत्वा अत्यतिष्ठत् दशांगुलम् ।

46 वृह० उप० ४-३-३२

47 आद्वैतक्षयात् सर्वं मृत्यु । वृह० उप० ३-२-१

48 आद्वैतक्षयात् सर्वं मृत्युः । वृह० उप० ३-२-१

The Upaiishads confirm the truth of this possible immortality in numerous statements and glimpses of this truth are easy to obtain in common life. The Upanishads are more interested in affirming the truth of immortality than in dilating upon the lamentable fact of death Almost every Upanishad affirms the truth of immortality. The Isha Upanishad declares that man conquers death by Karma and attains immortality by spiritual know ledge.[49] The Kena Upanishad says that those who know the spirit behind senses become immortal[50] The Katha Upanishad is a veritable gospel of death and immortality. It is by knowledge of spiritual reality that man can save himself from all-devouring death and attain immortality.[51] Duality is death[52] The mortal man becomes immortal by knowing the non-dual spiritual reality[53] The Mundaka Upanishad also affirms that spirit is the ultimate reality and it is immortal.[54] Prashna and Mundaka both confirm that one who knows Brahman attains fearlessness and immortality[55] The Taittiriya Upanishad clearly connects fearlessness and immortality with spiritual blissfulness It says that the realized man experiencing the spiritual bliss of Brahman does not fear anything including death[56] The Shwetashvatara declares that one who knows the spiritual reality transcends all

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49 अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते । ईश

50 धीराः प्रेत्यस्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति । केन० उप० १-२
विद्ययामृतमश्नुते । केन २-३

51 निचाय्य तन्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते । क० उप० १-३-१५

52 मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति । कठ० उप० २-१-१०

53 कठ० उप० २-३-१४, १५

54 तदमृतम् । मु० उप० २-२-२, २-२-७

55 प्रश्न उप० ५-७

56 आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न बिभेति कुतश्चन । तै० उप० २-९

sorrow, suffering[57] and bondage,[58] breaks the bonds of death[59] and attains infinite peace[60] and immortality.[61] He also attains eternal happiness and bliss [62] Thert is no other way of overcoming suffering and death [63] The Chhandogya Upanishad also confirms that one who knows the spiritual reality transcends sorrow[64] and suffering [65] He does not experience disease, suffering and death.[66] He becomes fearless and immortal [67] The spirit is immortal and infinite[68] and bliss consists in infinitude and not in limitedness [69] The Brihadaranyaga prays to God to lead man from death to immortality.[70] Maitreyi asks her husbands Yajnavalkya to tell her the secret by knowing which she may become immortal.[71] Yajnavalkya reveals to her the secret of death as spiritual rea-

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57 एक· कृतार्थो भवति वीत शोक । श्वे० उप० २-२-१४

58 ज्ञात्वा देव मुच्यते सर्वपाशै· - श्वे० उप० १-२-१५

59 तमेव ज्ञात्वा मृत्युपाशांश्छिनत्ति । श्वे० उप० ४-१५

60 निचाय्येमा शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति । श्वे० उप० ४-११

ज्ञात्वा शिव शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति । श्वे० उप० ४-१४

61 जुष्टस्ततस्तेनामृतत्वमेति । श्वे० उप० १-६

62 तेषा सुख शाश्वतम् । श्वे० उप० २-१२

63 नान्य पन्था ! श्वे० उप० ६-१५, ६-२०

64 तरति शोकमात्मवित् । छा० उप० ७-१-३

65 न पश्यो मृत्यु पश्यति न रोगम् । छा० उप० २७-२६-२

66 न पश्यो मृत्यु पश्यति न रोगम् । छा० उप० २६-२७-२

67 अमृतमभय प्रविशति । छां० उप० १-४-५

68 सत्य ज्ञानमनन्त ब्रह्म । तै० उप० ८-१२-१

अमृतस्या शरीरस्यात्मन. । छा० उप० ८-१२-१

69 यो वै भूमा तदेव सुखम् । न नाऽल्पे सुखमस्ति ।

70 मृत्यो मा अमृत गमय । बृह० उप०

71 ये नाहममृता स्याम । बृह० उप० ४-५-३

भगवान्वेद तदेव मे ब्रूहि । बृह० उप० ४-२-४-३

lity[72] The non-dual spirit underlying and controlling every one is the secret of immortality.[73] One who realizes Brahman becomes immortal. One who sees duality transmigrates from death to death[74] and one who realizes non-dualistic Brahman attains fearlessness and immortality.[75] Duality is death and realization of non-duality leads to immortality.[76]

Thus the Upanishads find the secret of immortality in the realization of non-dualistic and blissful spiritual reality. Such realization alone is the way to conquer death. This transcendental spiritual truth of life and immortality may appear unconvincing and unattainable to common understanding. It is undoubtedly very difficult to attain. Immortality cannot be an easy goal But it is not impossible It can be attained in life. Glimpses of this great spiritual truth of Upanishads can be obtained in common life which is sustained by the non-dualistic spirit Physical existence is dualistic and is cognised as such. Cognition also involved duality of subject and object But we also realize in life integral non-duality of experience in some measure. Life is not possible without the basis of this spiritual reality. As the Bsihadaranyaka says, all people live by a fraction of blissful spiritual reality.[77] The child enjoys non-duality with mother in the womb It enjoys it more consciously in suckling, in embrace and in affectionate fondling In later life duality developes but non-duality also grows. Life is happy and peaceful only in so far as it is supported by non-duality in human relations. This non-duality is enjoyed in super-conscious integral

72 बृह० उप० २-५-१

73 आत्माऽन्तर्याम्य मृत· । बृह० उप० ३-७

74 अशरीरोऽमृत: । बृह० उप० ४-४-७

75 अभयं हि वै ब्रह्म भवति य एव वेद । बृह० उप० ४-४-२५

76 आद्वैतक्षयात् सर्व मृत्यु· । शांकर भाष्य बृह० उप० ३-२-१

77 बृह० उप० ४-३-३२

experience It cannot be reflectively cognised as cognition involves duality of subject and object Integral experience of non-duality is immediate But it is most satisfying It expresses in peace, delight, smile and cheerfulness. This spiritual experience is transcendent of time, decay etc One maintains youth, health, cheerfulness and other virtues of life in so far as he enjoys this non-duality in life It resists aging, decay, disease etc This relative effect of non-dual spiritual joy in life can serve as a glimpse of the immortal reality of spirit. Its relative transcendence of time, decay and mutation suggests the absolute immortality and perfect blissfulness of spiritual realization which is the highest goal of life according to Upanishads and the idea of which is the greatest contribution of Upanishads to human thought and aspiration

The non-dualistic integral blissful experience is also the most positive content of life. It alone overcomes negation which constantly corrodes life with the course of time and ends in death. Immortality is positive and affirmative Death is the greatest negation Death is resisted in life every moment by this non-dualistic blissful exptrience which flows and expands in man's life It is clouded in life by the darkness of duality and consequent ignorance When this ignorance is overcome by a deeper and greater realization of non-duality, integrality, immediacy and bliss, killing process of time and death is transcended The spiritual reality ensures highest positive being and immortality by its affirmative experience, positive content and undiminishing blsss The supreme truth makes the eternal content of life Existence becomes integrated with infinitude and bliss Time is conquered in transcendence and negation of death is conquered in the absolute affirmation of blissful experience

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## CHAPTER XV

# TRANSVALUATION OF SECULAR VALUES

The foregoing chapters convincingly reveal the generally unfamiliar fact that almost all the secular values which are esteemed by common man and which are treated in axiological treatises are amply recognised in the Upanishads Some of the fundamental secular values like food, vital being and sex are elaborately dealt with in the larger Upanishads. The smaller Upanishads are too small in size to afford space for detailed treatment of anything. But some of them contain crucial principles of transvaluation of these values which implies their recognition also. Some of the secular values like health, physical strength, speech and bio-aesthetic values, which are not treated elaborately, are casually referred to in the Upanishads. But these casual references to them are so emphatic and significant that they indicate the importance given to them in the axiological view of the Upanishads

The elaborate and innocent treatment of the fundamental secular values found in the Upanishads convincingly shows that the Upanishads are not so exclusively and abstractly spiritual as they are generally believed to be. Nor are they so negatively spiritual as to leave no importance for worldly values. These elaborate treatments of secular values can also indicate the unfoundness of those interpretations and critical approaches to the Upanishadic Vedanta, which represent it as a negative and world-denying doctrine acrording to which secular values are illusory and false Such interpretations and approaches are so abundant and dominating that they have succeeded in establishing almost finally for common man as well as for learned scholars that the Vedanta is a completely transcendental doctrine which denies the reality of the world and worldly values A negative, abstract and condemnatory attitude towards worldly values is understood to be both the popular and the scholarly

abstract and condemnatory attitude towards life and worldly view of Upanishadic Vedanta.

A survey of secular values contained in the foregoing chapters exposes how mistaken and misleading is the negative view of the Vedanta The Vedanta is undoubtedly a spiritualistic philosophy. It regards Supreme Spirit as the Supreme and ultimate reality The Supreme Spirit is also a transcendent reality. It is beyond all modes of empirical being and empirical experiences It is not an objective being and cannot be known as an object Nor is it a knowing subject Empirical knowledge is a conscious phenomenon Consciousness is a dualistic phenomenon. It obtains between a subject and an object Object is cognised in conscious knowledge as its content But it is cognised as an external being alien to the subject. Thus conscious knowledge involves also an alienation of object which is an 'other' to the subject. The subject is often treated in philosophy as a metaphysical entity which maintains its identity in the flow of experience and explains the continuity and coherence knowledge It is also proved by memory and recognition. But in fact it is not a metaphysical entity but an empirical phenomenon operating as a pole of reference in experience and life

The identity of the subject cannot be indicated in terms of any inner cognitive content All cognitive content is objective and external Though apprehtnded in cognition, it is an 'other' and alien to the subject The subject is represented in analytical epistemology as an abstract 'I' which in fact is more phenomenal than metaphysical The metaphysical reality is the non-dualistic spirit which lies behind and beyond all objective and subjective empirical phenomena Though it is transcendental, yet it supports and sustains all empirical phenomena including the 'I' which seems to be a persistent entity uniting knowledge This transcendent spirit has an inner content of its own which is revealed in the Upanishads as 'ananda', delight or bliss Spiritual bliss is an integral and excessive experience

It is an exuberance of being. It is conscious only in the sense that it is not unconscious or material or purely objective being. It is subjective in a sense. But it is above the duality of consciousness. Consciousness implies a duality of subject and object, & an alienation of object. Blissful Spirit is integral being. It is usually described as non-dualistic and the Vedanta is called an Advaitic philosophy. The Advaita is a negative designation of a positive reality which is revealed only in actual experience. All description is conceptual and propositional. Hence it is intellectual and implies a duality of subject and object This limitation of linguistic expression has led the Vedantic seers to designate integral spiritual reality in negative terms which suggest transcendence of empirical limitations in integral Spiritual experience. This transcendent reality is abundant, excessive and expresses in exuberant joy in life in which ills and evils of life are transcended.

The transcendent spiritual reality is the Supreme Value in Vedanta. But its Supremacy does not suggest denial of other values in life, though it certainly requires a subordination of them to it This derogation implied in this subordination can be overcome in exaltation of these values by their integration with Supreme spiritual value and divine delight which characterizes it. The denial of the worldly values is deduced from an abstract and negative understanding of this transcendent nature of Spiritual reality. A few stray utterances of some sages of the Upanishads may also suggest and support denial of other values But the general trend and text of the Upanishads does not support denial of other values. On the other hand it supports the due recognition and appreciation of other values on the part of Upanishads. The Brahman of Upanishads is not a lion's den like Spinoza's Absolute which devours all other modes of the world. It is in fact the supporter and sustainer of all modes of worldly existence. The Upanishads regard Brahmán as the source of creation and its sustainer also. It is not the

dark night in which all modes of the world lose their identity and existence. It is the divine light which illumines them all and reveals and refracts their various hues like colours of the spectrum.

The modern interpretations of the Advaita as Monism are also responsible for presentation of the Vedanta as a denial of all worldly values The idea of monism is traceable to some stray words of Upanishads, but it has been reinforced by Western Monisms like that of Spinoza Monism is a positive rendering of Advaita or non-dualism But it is a rational reduction. If duality or diversity is denied reason demands a monistic metaphysics according to which reality is one without a second. Intellect is dualistic Thought is also dualistic in form but reason demands unity as a principle of explanation It has often tended to monism in philosophy Pluralism has been proposed only by philosophers who have contented with empirical actuality or have rested on personal individualism But monism is an anomalous doctrine Unity can be rationally contemplated though even its contemplation involves duality Physical unity is relative to diversity. We can only think of unities in the physical world Complete physical monism will lead to a block universe

Brahman or spirit is not a physical unity When conceived as a metaphysical unity, it becomes an abstract and negative reality nihilating all modes of empirical universe Tht Vedantic reality is not such a unity. It is not intellectual or rational but intuitional or spiritual experience All intellectual formulations of spiritual reality are unwarranted The Upanishads regard it as unapproachable by reason It is 'transcendental experience which cannot be attained by reason' say the Katha Upanishad[1] Integral spiritual experience is a transformation of our empirical attitude fraught with duality and in-

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1 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । कठ उप० १-२-९

dividuality. Our inner being is transformed in this transcendental experience. But the objective existence and empirical values are not destroyed by it. Our attitude towards them is transformed They cease to be empirical determinants of our life. They are integrated into a spiritual experience and a spiritual view of life. It is this concrete integration of empirical diversity into a spiritual experience that is intended to be suggested by the term Advaita. This non-duality expresses in an integral delight which cannot be reasoned out but can only realised in actual experience.

The non-dualistic reality of the Upanishads does not devour or deny the empirical diversity of objective modes of existence. It recognises empirical values. The recognition of these values is evident in elaborate treatment of these values in several important and authentic Upanishads. Food, vital being sex and other secular values have been elaborately dealt with in several Upanishads. There is no indication of any doubt about the real importance of these values in the texts of the Upanishads dealing with these values These treatments of secular values are entirely innocent and earnest. These seem to suggest that the Upanishadic seers take these values as genuinely as common men do in life. On many occasions these values are appreciated in their popular empirical status without any indication of their integration with supreme spiritual value, though on several occasions their axiological dependence on spirit has been clearly stated On some occasions this dependence has been separately asserted as a principle of axiological transvaluation of secular values.

However the secular and worldly values have been duly and often strongly recognised in the Uponishads. They have many times been highly appreciated. The innocent and candid recognition of secular and worldly values, in texts widely spread over the Upanishads, belies the popular belief as well as scholarly opinion that the Upanishads are absolutely and abstractly spiri-

tual and they deny the secular and worldly values. Isolated statements suggesting a denial of secular and social values cannot over-ride the numerous statements supporting these values. Several statements which seem to condemn (not deny) these values are also inspired by a realization of ultimate limitation of these values Condemnation of wealth and pleasures in the Katha Upanishad[2] is an example in the point Yajnavalkya's renunciation and gospel of the limitation of the value of wealth is another such example.[3] But all these examples and statements do not confirm a denial of secular and worldly values. They only suggest limitations of these values and need of their transvaluation by integration with the supreme spiritual value.

The transvaluation of secular and worldly values by integration with supreme spiritual value and the exaltation of these values thereby is the cardinal functional principle of the Upanishadic Vedanta Instead of condemnation or denial of these values it implies an elevation, exaltation and appreciation of these values But recognition of secular values in the Upanishads is by no means to be taken (or mistaken) as an affirmation of these values in their empirical status as it is done in the common view of life It is not to be understood to be so even when several treatments of these values found in the Upanishads seem to imply such an affirmation without any doubt about their popular value and without any need of a spiritual transvaluation of them Some salient and emphatic statements of Upanishads affirming such transvaluation of secular and worldly values are to be taken as highlighting the general axiological principle of the Upanishads This principle is to be understood as the guiding formula of practical cultural life as distinguished from an abstract metaphysical view of life and a popular empirical course of life This principle of axiological and spiritual

2 न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्य । कठ उप० १-१-२७

3 अमृतत्वस्य तु नाशास्ति वित्तेन । छां० उप० २-४-२

transvaluation of secular and worldly values is to be extended and applied to even those gospels of secular values which contain no indication of such spiritual transvaluation of them.

A most prominent dictum of such spiritual transvaluation is contained in the very first phrase of the first verse of the Isha Upanishad which is first in the traditional order of Upanishads and is foremost in importance among the older Upanishads. This dictum urges us to integrate all secular values and all modes of worldly existence and activity with a sincere faith in the Blissful spiritual reality governing the universe.[4] Such integration leads to contentment and love in life, which concretely confirm this integration. The gospel of the Upanishad is the foremost among principles of spiritual integration of empirical modes of life. But besides this the principle of spiritual integration has been revealed in some other Upanishads also. Yajnavalkya's instruction to his inquisitive wife Maitreyi is another example of of it. Yajnavalkya reveals to his inquisitive wife Maitreyi is another example of it. Yajnavalkya reveals to his wife that supreme spirit is the supreme principle of interest or value in life. Things, persons and relations are not dear to us for their own sake, but they are all dear for the sake of spirit underlying them and sustaining them. All things and relations seem to have value in themselves. But that value is provisional, personal and selfish Even such value is not intrinsic. That also depends on uderlying spiritual non-duality which sustains sanity and interest in life A fuller realization of spiritual non-duality will endow things and personal relations with greater value and will infuse deeper delight in life.

Metaphysical assertions of the supremacy and ultimacy of the spirit are numerous in the Upanishads. They confirm that the spirit is the supreme reality and ultimate basis of all other values of life like vital spirit, mind, senses etc. Statements affir-

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4 ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् । ईश उप० १

ming the concrete principle of spiritual integration of their values are rare life like the two mentioned above But these rare statements are enough to confirm the practical principle of spiritual integration of values in concrete life. Such integration forms the bridge between abstract spiritual metaphysics of the Vedanta and concrete empirical life with all its limitations and its likelihood to perversion through indulgence.

The central principle of spiritual integration of secular values is laid down in the two rare statements of the Upanishads mentioned above. This integration has been concretely adopted or attained in traditional cultural life of the people of India.

Some traces of intermediate principles of concrete application of the general principle of spiritual integration of secular values can be discovered in the Upanishads. Where these principles are not traceable in specific and definite form these can be worked out as implications of the general principle in the context of specific secular values

Body is the basic secular value All other values are cherished in bodily existence. Senses are the bodily instruments of activity and knowledge The Kena Upanishad reveals the deeper spiritual support of senses, vital being and the mind The Upanishads have confirmed the divinity of the food grains which build and sustain the body and with it the sense organs Healthy and strong body is treated as the standard of estimation of life.[5] Physical strength is the wealth of the body It is deemed to be necessary for spiritual realization. A weakly person without physical strength cannot realize the spirit[6] Physical strength becomes spiritual when it is used in altruistic activity asd service of others, as suggested in the second verse of the Isha Upa-

5 युवा स्यात्·········द्रढिष्ठो वलिष्ठः । तै० उप० २-८

6 नायमात्मा वलहीनेन लभ्य । मु० उप० ३-२-४

nishad.[7] Such activity is conducive to health and losgevity.[8] This moral spirituality of physical strength has been appreciated in the Upanishad when besides health and strength moral nobility also is included among the qualifications of a standard man in the estimation of ilfe contained in the Taittiriya Upanishad.[9] Bio-aesthetic values of smile, cheerfulness fragrance of body, sweetness of voice, sharpness of the ear etc. which are deemed to be marks of spiritual achievement are spiritual in character also. These obtain spiritual non-duality through immediate affiliation with others and thus implicity confirm their spirituality of which these are like flowers and fruit They are immediately and intrinsically spiritualized We may say that spirituality is their nature, character and sustenance. These are concrete modes of spirituality in life. These are spiritual flowers of life which adorn the horizons of human life by the flavour and hues of their intrinsic spirituality which they express and ensure.

The senses are designed by God as extrovert. They are directed outwards and attend to external objects[10] The mind is mobile and it is also attracted by external objects of pleasure. The intellect does not seek pleasure but it seeks satisfaction in the analysis of ideas which are numerous and diverse. The ego is a hard principle of duality and consequent unspirituality of sense-organs and mind All these are naturally dualistic, determinate and unspiritualistic. Senses are particularly extrovert, objective and dualistic. They are naturally directed towards external objects and initiate the dualistic feeling of the subject of cognition. They are forcibly drawn by their objects, the eyes by colours, the ear by sound and so on The mind follows the sense organs. It also is forced.

7 ईश० उप० २

8 ईश० उप० २

9 तै० उप० २-८

10 पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत् स्वयभू । क० २-१-१

to attend to objects, as the Gita says[11] Intellect seems to be independent as a discriminating judging and criticizing faculty. Its impartiality supports its independence It is certainly less determinate than senses and mind But determination can be discovered in intellect also in the form of uniformity and necessary succession and coherence of ideas.

Determination and duality are characters of nature So far as empirical modes of life like senses mind, ego and intellect are dualistic and determinate they are natural They are limited by duality and there is no joy in them due to limitation[12] Some sense experiences and mental ideas seem to be pleasant But that pleasure is not an intrinsic virtue of them It is originally due to spirit which lies behind them[13] When one is extremely deprived of spiritual non-duality in life like a lunatic or an utterly alienated person he loses sensory pleasure and mental joy. Degrees of pleasurableness of sensory and mental experiences are according to the spiritual non-duality obtained in the life of an individual This fact can be verified by statistical observation of instances.

Moreover the pleasure of senses and also of ideas is fleeting. We seek continuation of it by repetition of experiences This constitutes much of the course of our life Repetition also involves dissatisfaction and consequent craving which constitutes common life These empirical modes of life with the above characters are natural and are common to men and animals. Animals excel men in regard to senses like smell Human vision and audition are more developed But there is little deference in men and animals in regard to the dualism and determination of these empirical modes of life Men seems to be free in regard to mental ideas and intellectual reflections. His ideation and

11 गीता २-६०

12 नाऽल्पे सुखमस्ति । छां० उप० ६-१३-१

13 आनन्द ब्रह्मेति । तै० उप० ३-६

thought is more developed and is freer also. But it also involves more determination than we suspect. Those who contemplate and think do not do so as freely as they or we believe They do it largely because they are forced to do it by their particular mode of being, specially as characterised by the degree of spiritual non-duality obtained by them and the degree of privation of it. Even moral action is not as free as ethics will demand it to be, though it is characterised by greater freedom than other modes of life as it is inspired more by spiritual non-duality

Empirical modes of life and secular value of life have been recognised in the Upanishads. Considerable space is devoted to their treatment the Upanishads Many of these treatments seem to be innocent They seem to appreciate the importance of these modes in their natural form, as common men do But with the background of spiritual metaphysics of the Upanishads and in the light of specific principles of spiritual integration of these modes, they cannot be taken to have been recognised in the Upanishads in their natural form with all its limitations. That will reduce Upanishadic philosophy to a popular naturalism which it is certainly not. But it is also not an abstract and negative spiritualism denying the worldly values, as it is often represented to be. It is a concrete and living spiritualism which comprehends worldly values in an intimate integration. Spiritual integration of these empirical modes and secular values of life must be understood as the ultimate intention of the Upanishads even if it is not clearly indicated everywhere in the treatment of these modes and values The principle of spiritual integration has been stated clearly and candidly in a view utterances of the Upanishads and is to be carried over to those treatments of secular values where it is not referred to in the text.

Transcendence of duality and determination involved in the empirical status of worldly values is the ultimate principle of

spiritual integration of these values Spiritualization of natural life is the simple consequence of such integration No detailed or practical mode or method of this spiritual integration is laid down in the Upanishads But contentment, austerity, penance, moral discipline, faith etc have been suggested in several Upanishads as practical means of it. The fact is that spirit is the reality which shines in its own glory and it is not causally related to any external means Shankara has strongly maintained that spiritual realization is not a fruit of any action or effect of any cause[14] Katha Upanishad says that it cannot be obtained by reason or thought[15] All these are fraught with duality, and hence are inadequate for it. But Shankara admits that moral action etc can serve as indirect means of it and can be conducive to self-realization through purification of man's being[16] Contentment is both the consequence of and contributory to spiritual realization. It is underlined in the first verse of Isha Upanishad which contains the principle of spiritual integration of empirical values in a most effective form. Austerity, penance and self-restraint are modes of contentment which assume the form of exalted spiritual discipline Moral discipline and moral conduct are expressions of above modes of discipline in social conduct of life Faith is a spirituo-emotional regard for higher values It works behind all modes of spiritual discipline and moral conduct These cannot be possible without faith as sincere and deep regard for higher values.

All these modes of spiritual discipline contribute to the cultivation of non-duality which is conducive to spirituality and spiritualization of worldly values Secular and worldly values are natural and determinate They are one-dimensional That dimension is a natural necessity. Spiritual discipline through modes mentioned

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14 अफल हि मोक्ष । वृह० उप० ३-३-१ भूमिका

15 नैपा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । कठ उप० १-२-९

16 आरात् उपकारकत्वात् कर्मण । ब्रह्मसूत्र भाष्य ४-१-१६

above introduces a second dimension in life which can be defined as limitation and which results in restraint and contentment. It relieves the rigour of natural necessity and also moderates egoism which is the pivot of natural duality, and thus it extends life to altruistic horizons Moderation of egoism promotes non-dualism and spirituality characterized by it.

Thus the way of spiritual integration of empirical modes and secular values of life lies through cultivation of non-duality and promotion of spirituality thereby. This spiritual discipline reduces the rigour of natural determinism of empirical life and releases the spiritual freedom and delight in greater proportion than it is quantitatively understandable. Moderation and contentment diminishes the conflict for secular values and promotes understanding, love and cordiality which incorporate greater non-duality. Spirituality is undoubtedly intrinsic and independent of any causes It shines in its own glory and greatness[17] It is of the nature of grace of divine compassion than like an achievement of persons endeavouring to attain it[18] Instead of his choosing spirit as his end, he feels himself as chosen for deliverance by divine grace. But as Shankara admits all these modes of discipline are conducive to it and facilitate the path of the aspirant.

Promotion of non-duality which expresses in contentment, moderation, reduction of conflict for secular values, love, charity etc. reflects in positive and purposive expression of spirituality in life. Secular values become common means of common life, instead of being cause of conflict and aggrandisement. In the mutual joy of material means the latter become spiritualized in effect The bones of contention become the blossoms of common delight. Meagre share of means makes for abundant

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17 स्वे महिम्नि । छा० उप० ६-१४-१

18 यमेवैष वृणुते । कठ उप० १-२-२३, मुडक उप० ३-२-३

and enduring joy, while luxurious means afforded passing pleasure and aggravated lust for more The spiritualization of material means and secular values, reflects in the spiritualization of senses, mind and intellect Instead of being wearing agents of natural necessity, they become instruments of divine joy They operate in peace and mutual love, instead of acting in restless conflict with others Instead of serving the ego they serve the spirit and with it others—friends, kins, etc. They also acquire new dimensions of efficiency and excellence The voice becomes sweet and serene, the ear sharp and receptive, the mind calm and peaceful The intellect also comes to rest in spirit and ceases to indulge in restlessness and urgent ideation

The secular values of food, wealth sex etc also, which are recognised in the Upanishads, acquire a new dimension of spirituality. They are not negated or denied as it is believed to happen in abstract and negative view of Vedanta They retain their being and character, but they are so transformed as to become perfectly in tune with the super-conscious bliss of non-dualistic spirituality. Vital being is the essence of human existence and it is supported by food. The Upanishads have dealt elaborately with vital being and food. Vital being is the central pivot of life and all modes of life are centred in it like spokes in the axle Senses, mind etc all depend on it The vital being is supported ultimately by supreme spirit but it operates in life as a natural principle The spirit is its basic energising power. By understanding the spiritual secret of vital being and by harmonising it with spirit through the spiritual integration of other empirical modes of life, one can ensure longer and healthier life and greater excellence of modes of life. The integration of vital being with supreme spirit is subtler and deeper and ensures excellence of life in a fine manner.

Functioning of vital spirit is almost unconscious and does not involve cognitive dualistic consciousness. Hence it can be more intimately integrated with super-conscious spirit

Food is the material basis of vital being. Man cannot live without food His vitality fades without food and cannot be sustained without it. Food is a material and external object. It is also individualistic. Benefit of food is confined to an individual body It cannot be commonly shared like mental ideas and attitudes It often becomes the cause of conflict which involves severe duality Hence spiritual integration of food is extremely difficult Every body eats his own food, and non-duality is not possible in the physical dimension of food. There is no specific indication in the Upanishads of the spiritual integration of food It can be deduced from the general principle of spiritual integration. Such a deduction is made in the Gita[19] and in the religious, ethical and cultural tradition of India. The principle is deduced from contentment and operates in the form of sanctification and cordial distribution of food. Prasad of the deities is a symbolical mode of this principle. Offering food to deities implies a recognition of the fact that it is the divine gift of God We have no right to monopolize it It is to be offered to deities and to be distributed equally as their gift. Feasting, fasting, hospitality, common eating etc. are cultural modes of spiritualization of food This spiritualization signifies the over-coming of the rigid individuality and consequent duality with which food is deeply fraught The delight of distribution, feasting, hopitality and common eating is the mark of spiritualization of food Spiritual integration of food passes the difficult barrier of duality and paves the way for spiritual integration of other secular values

Wealth is a fascinating secular value. It is a means to comforts and luxuies of life. Identification of being with it leads to glorification of human existence. But it also leads to exaltation of ego and consequent aggravation of duality. The Indian tradition of language has come to recognise a rich man as a

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19 गीता० अध्याय ३ श्लोक ११, १२, १३

great man (mahajan) and as a superior or as excellent person ('seth' from Shreshtha). Most of the luxuries and pleasures of life can be secured by wealth Hence love of wealth is so natural in man. Society and civilization is mad after wealth But wealth is external to the being of man It is not even identified with body like food And mental peace, joy, love etc cannot be secured by wealth Many rich men will be found to be internally unhappy and mentally miserable Hence the Katha Upanishad says that man can not secure satisfication and happiness by wealth[20] This limitation of wealth is to be clearly recognised But economic value is a necessary means of life like food. Hence it is to be admitted and to be integrated with spiritual duality. Socialization and distribution of wealth are social modes of this integration; charity and contentment are moral modes for it Consecration of wealth to God like food and using it meagrely as a gift of God is the religio-spiritual mode for the spiritualization of wealth like food The rigour of materlal duality of wealth is minimized in such spiritual integration of it and instead of being a bone of contention it becomes a delightful blessing in life.

Sex is potent secular value It is evidently secular as it is related to bodily excitement and function It is deeply impelling and aggressive particularly in males As a biological value it is individual Its egoism is more emphatic in males As a biological value it is individual Its egoism is more emphatic in males, due to their aggressive sexual dynamism and their lack of maternity Eevn as biological it is less dualistic in women Maternity is the initial biological basis for spiritual modification of sex in human life & society Non-duality has developed through family and culture Sex as a biological urge can be a cause of conflict like wealth Wars have been waged for both in history. But even as a biological function it contains some deeds of non-duality Cohabitation is the most intimate mode of non-duality

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20 न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्य । क० उप० १-१-२७

that is possible on the physical plane. It has been extended to domestic and social life to a large extent with all the dualistic limitations of biological nature of man.

The Upanishads recognise the value of sex as innocently as that of food. There are no puritanic strains in the Upanishads as there developed in later ascetic tradition of Indian religion and thought Besides recognising sex, there are some indications of the ways through which sex can be integrated with non-dualistic spirituality. The biological mating generates a deeper non-duality in the couple. Contentment, self-restraint, regard for motherhood, monogamy etc. are moral means of spiritualization of sex. The delightfulness of sexual activity which is strongly recognised in the Upanishads marks its kinship with spirituality[21] Mutuality of sexual pleasure initiates its spiritualization. Sanctification of sex in Indian religion and culture effects highest spiritualization of it. Shiva-Parvati are the highest symbols of it Spiritualization of sex which can be facilitated by spiritualization of other values, can serve as the source of greatest happiness and joy in human life.

Activity is the natural mode of life. Life is temporal and time is a course. Life has to move on with time. With human agency and volition movement takes the form of action which becomes ethical when dominantly motivated by will. But even when it is voluntary, action is not entirely free from natural impulsion. Much of human action is individual, egoistic & selfish- Hence it is dualistic and unspiritual The temporal course of action is difficult to reconcile with the non-durational character of spirit. Hence Shankara decries action. The Upanishads also regard action as incommensurate with spirit[22] The spirit is transcendent of time. But it is not completely opposed to it.

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21 उपस्थ इति आनन्दयितव्यम् । प्रश्न उप० ४-७

22 नास्त्यकृत: कृतेन । मु० उप० १-२-१२

Dynamics is integral to its nature.[23] The coherence of action with spirit is possiblt through what is called Karmayoga in Gita. The Isha Upanishad also implies Karmyoga in its second verse. Action is of several kinds. Naturalistic action is identification with natural impulse It is one-dimensional. Moral action implies regulation of it by will, which introduces a second dimension in action. Spiritual action is a dynamics which is coherent with transctndence of natural determination and conflict of moral will. It is spontaneously good action. It is altruistic and not egoistic like natural action Such action is also delightful for the agent and also for others.

Intellect also can be reconciled with spirit like action In this reconciliation it becomes subservient to spirit. Its duality is not antagonistic but it is servictable to spiritual non-duality. Such intellect consecrated to spirit serves as a bridge between the world of diversity and the blissful realm of spiritual non-duality.

Sleep is naturally akin to superconscious spiritual experience The dualistic experience is suspended in it and a person reaches the threshold of spiritual domain Deep and dreamless sleep is the bridge between waking world of duality and the transcendent domain of superconscious blissful non-dualistic experience Spiritual integration of other secular values is conducive to deep sleep as it is to attainment of non-dualistic spiritual experience.

The negative secular values of suffering, fear and death are overcome and transcended in non-dualistic spiritual experience. Spiritual integration of other secular values minimizes the affliction of suffering, fear and death All these imply nihilation

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23 तदेजते । ईश उप० ५

24 कुर्व्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि । ईश० २

and contraction of man's being. Spiritual non-duality overcomes them by expansion and enhancement of man's positive being in blissful experience.

Thus the transvaluation of secular values transforms mundane human life of suffering, fear and death into an enduring positive being of integral and immortal delight.



CHAPTER XVI

# SOCIAL VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are esoteric spiritual scriptures They contain a philosophy of spiritual life, contemplated by sages of ancient India in their secluded forest hermitages. They are not social treatises either in their purpose or in their setting The social thought of India is to be found in the Dharmashastras and Smrities or the Social Codes It is no failing of the Upanishads if they are not social in their purpose or in their principles Social approach to Upanishads is not proper for finding their view about social life That is needed only to counter-act the criticism that the Upanishads have no regard for the social values as they have no consideration for secular values The abstract and the negative view of the Upanishads maintains that the Upanishads propound an abstract and negative spiritualism according to which Brahman is the only reality and the world and the individual and consequently society are all un-real Such a view is a misrepresentation of Upanishads It ignores the evidence of the texts which contain elaborate treatments of secular values like food, wealth, sex etc and which has been adduced liberally in the previous chapters to substantiate the fact that the Upanishads duly recognise secular values, and in regard to some secular values they exhibit greater appreciation than can be found even in the avowedly empirical philosophies Food, sex, sleep, smile, sweet voice, lustre of the face, fragrance of the body etc are notable among these secular values under-lined in the Upanishads.

The Upanishads are not social treatises and they do not present any considered view about social relations and values But they do not ignore them. A few casual utterances which reflect an ascetic view and a disregard of family cannot over-rule the general faith of Upanishads in social relations and social

values Even in the generally spiritual texture of Upanishadic thought there are to be found patterns of social relations which suggest the importance of social values in the eyes of Upanishadic sages Most of sages were family men in the sense that they were married and lived with their families in the forest hermitages Wives of some sages appear in the Upanishads with notable roles With the recognition of family domestic values are moderately considered. Motherhood is particularly honoured and emphasised. The romantic relations of men and women are not appreciated in the Upanishads. They are not in keeping with the general trend and tradition of society particularly in regard to relation of opposite sexes. Premarital freedom has been severely curbed in ancient Indian society due to the early sexual mauration of girls in tropical climate and also on account of an emphasis on sexual restraint even to the extent of celebacy. Not much domestic love is to be observed between the hermit-couples. Hermits and sages observing a life of austerity and penance for the contemplation of spirit cannot be expected to be indulgent in love or romance. They lived a simple and austere life, of course, with their wives and children in which sexual enjoyment with their own wives was recognised as an important recourse to pleasure.

Children particularly sons were expected to live in strict educational and moral discipline. Fondling of children was not fashionable in ancient society either of India or of other countries. Children, particularly sons, were considered to be of social and religious importance Sons rescued a man from hell and secured his way to heaven. They were brought up under strict educational and moral discipline with the intention of cultivating spiritual enlightment which was the supreme purpose of life in the eyes of the Upanishadic sages. Sons were more like disciples for the sages They instructed the sons with their disciples and imparted spiritual knowledge to them. Patriarchal authoritarianism of ancient times is evidenced in some cases in the Upanishads. But the spiritual salvation of children is emphasised as the supreme purpose of life.

As the Upanishads contain esoteric spiritual instructions imparted by sages to disciples, spirituo-educational relations of teachers and disciples are most important among the social relations recognised in the Upanishads The Upanishadic sages were like patriarchs with small groups of disciples who lived with them for spiritual learning and practice The disciples were treated by sages much like their sons. They were given food and were imparted most secret and valuable esoteric spiritual knowledge considered by sages as greater than the kingdom of the three worlds.[1] Some traces of strictness with disciples are to be found in the Upanishads They were often required to carry fire on their heads but usually had to fetch water and fuel for the sacrificial ceremonies of the preceptors As Pippalada admits it was considered to be the duty of teachers to reveal to disciples the truth if they knew it[2] Some teachers were reti-
Such reticence was also due to the fact that the spiritual know-
cent like Upakosala[3] in readily imparting knowledge to disciples
ledge was regarded as a great secret to be imparted with great caution only to deserving disciples[4] The common custom of hermitage institutions of spiritual learning proves the wide urge for spiritual quest in ancient India the like of which cannot be traced in any other society in those ancient times Except for the isolated and small Platonic academy of Greece, it is difficult to find such devoted and dedicated tradition of philosophic learning as existed in the numerous hermitages of ancient India.

Fraternal relation is an important and developed social value. It is the bridge to general human relationship which is prominent in Indian tradition. But general fraternal relationship of

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1 छा० उप० ३-११-६

2 प्रश्न उप० प्रश्न ६

3 ज्येष्ठाय पुत्राय पिता ब्रह्म प्रब्रूयात् प्रणाय्यायवाऽन्तेवासिने ।

छा० उप० ३-११-५

4 सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।

the kind of Islam which follows from the common fatherhood of God is not prominent in Indian tradition. It is a masculine virtue which follows from the fatherhood of God It could not fllourish in Indian tradition due to the dominance of motherhood in Indian cultural sentiment At best it was confined to family. Ramayana embodies the highest ideal of fraternal relation, but mostly it was a reason for family feuds as is exemplified by Mahabharata and by the history and common life of India. Divisibility of agricultural land was a natural cause of fraternal differences It continues to be so even today.

Brotherly relationship even within the domestic limit is not found in the Upanishads No two persons are mentioned as brothers It is not acceptable that no sage had more than one son. Nor is the sororal relationship mentioned in the Upanishads It is so prominent and effective in popular cultural tradition of India. But it is conspicuous by its absence in the Upanishads. Except for Gargi no young girl is mentioned in the Upanishads The effect of popular culture could not perhaps persist in the forest hermitages and could not be maintained by the seekers of spiritual truth as they pursued it.

Communal relationship of cordiality or of conflict is not notable in the Upanishads Communities and castes existed in those times There is mention of the castes of Brahmin, Kshattriya and Shudra in the Upanishads Strangely enough there is no mention of Vaishyas in the Upanishads. It may be because they were not at all interested in spiritual quest The reason of it was their occupation with trade and their indulgence in wealth which is evidently discouraged in the Upanishads as incoherent with spiritual quest.

The Brahmins are prominent in the Upanishads as sages and teachers The question of admission of Satyakama to the hermitage of Haridrumata underlines this prominence. The sages were usually Brahmins as they counted spiritual knowledge as

a class Kings like Janaka and Janashruti and Shudras like Raikva who were interested in spiritual knowledge were exceptional. But it shows kingly concern for spirituality in ancient India. The conflict of or competition between the Brahmins and Khattriyas in the field of spiritual knowledge is an exaggeration of Western scholars on slender grounds.

But if there was no communal conflict in the Upanishads there is no communal accord either. Communal accord is a limited form of brotherhood. The reason which precluded the latter also prevented the former. General brotherly feeling did not exist in ancient India either in the society or in communities. That is the reason of lack of unity in India, which persists even today. That was due to lack of submission to a common secular cause Spiritual quest or faith could not make this cause, though theoretically it should make the deepest cause for it It could not make the cause for brotherhood or unity as it could not be understood in its concrete and social context so clearly as it was necessary. Competitions among learned Brahmins are notable in Upanishads. Cooperative understanding which is propounded in principle,[5] is exemplified rarely as it is in the beginning of the Shwetashwatara Upanishad where the sages consider together the nature of ultimate reality as cause of the universe and the support of life [6]

Relations of the king with people, though political, are also social, particularly in India Indian tradition considers the king as the head of a family and regards people as his children to be looked after by him like children [7] The Sanskrit word for people (praja) means progeny King Dushyanta declares himself to be a relative to people which they lack due to any kind of misfor-

5 श्वेताश्वतर उप० १-१

6 राजा प्रजारजन लब्धवर्णं । रघुवश

7 प्र+जा=सन्तान

tune[8] To look after people and particularly the forest hermits was the duty of the king. Sita requests Rama as the king to count her among hermits and look after with them.[9] Kings used to visit hermitages and ensure the welfare of hermits. The Upanishadic scenes are a queer combination of sages and kings. Several Upanishads depict meetings of kings and sages. In the Prashna Upanishad six princes ask sage Pippalada questions about metaphysical matters. In Chhandogya Upanishad sage Ushasti attends the sacrifice and symposium in the court of a king.[10] Janashruti and Ashwapati are presented as kings intereted in philosophical inquiry.[11] Janaka is presented in the Brihadaranyaka as a great patron of learned sage. He gave gifts of cows and gold to sages. King Ashwapati boasts of the high morality of his people[12] which indicates the excellence of his administration. Such philosophic and spiritual relations between kings and sages are rare to find in any other society. They indicate the cordiality between political power and spiritual truth which constitutes Indian political message to the world.

Besides particular social relations emphasis on general human relationship is a notable feature of the Upanishads. Particular relationships have some natural and secular basis but general human relationship is more specifically spiritual. It is the test of social morality of a people. Moral virtues form the foundation of general human relationship. Altruism is more evident in it than in particular relationships. Upanishadic spiritualism is deeply humanistic in its implications and effects. Spiritual reality is transcendent and above good and evil. But it is

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8 येन येन वियुज्यन्ते प्रजा स्निग्धेन वन्धुना—अभिरमन शकुन्तल

9 तपस्विसामान्यभेवक्षणीया ।   रघुवंश

10 छान्देग्य उप० अव्याय १ खंड १०

11 छां० उप० अध्याय ४ खंड १

अध्याय ५ खंड ११

12 न मे स्तेनो जनपदे ।   छा० उप० ५-११-५

essentially good.[13] Morality is an integral dimension of it Hence spirituality leads to virtues of love and regard of other persons. A spiritual man overcomes hatred[14] and fosters love for all, which is the basis of cordial general human relationship.

Hospitality is a common practical form of cordial human relationship Indian tradition extols hospitality with an extraordinary emphasis The guest was considered to be like a god and treated with great respect and regard He was not always a familiar person He could be a stranger and he could come unexpectedly on any day. Hence he was called 'atithi' i e. a person the date of whose coming could not be anticipated The considerate treatment accorded by Yama to Nachiketas as his guest affords an evidence of the orthodox faith in hospitality. Sharing of his food with sage Ushasti who was starving, by the elephant driver is another example of it. Hospitality is a mode of humanity and is a cardinal form of cordinal general human relationship It signifies the profound importance of social relationship.

The importance of these general and particular social relationships in the Upanishads marks their regard for social values. As the Upanishads are spiritual treatises and not social codes, we cannot expect an elaborate treatment of social values in them But spirituality in its living and concrete form, should express in cordial social relations As the spiritual quest of Upanishads is rather abstract and individual, social relationships are not appreciated in them to the extent they should have been done The domestic relationship is particularly not so sweet as it should be Wife and children, treated with affection, can form the schema to concrete spiritual realization in life and society and can help in making hospitality and humanity really practicable and spiritually ecective.

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13 शान्त शिव अद्वैत ब्रह्म मां० उप० ६

14 यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि अत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मान ततो न विजुगुप्सते । ईश० उप० ६

## CHAPTER XVII

# GENERAL HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

All human relationships whether particular or general are based on human sentiments and consideration which follow from them. Cordial human sentiments are fundamentally spiritual. Human cordiality is a concrete expression of spiritual non-duolity. Spirit is non-dualistic reality Its monism is a demand of intellectual metaphysics. But non-duality of spirit is not merely negative It is negative so far as it implies a transcendence of dualities and conflicts of human life and relations which alienate inner selves of men and create emptiness in their hearts. Enduring joy of unity, affiliation and integrity is the positive significance of non-duality and positive content of man's inmost being

All cordial and affectionate human relationships are spiritual in so far as they imply an overcoming of duality which implies individuality, selfishness and conflict. Duality is a natural fact and confines man, like animals, to strict individuality, egoism and selfishness. There is no room in it for any cordial relationship implying transcendence of duality and selfishness. Whatever cordiality appears among animals is also an expression of a spontaneous spirituality in them and a natural non-duality operating with the limitation of individualistic selfishness It expresses more evidently in breeding of young ones In human society and civilization it has developed to the extent of laudable ideals of love and sacrifice This development has been possible by virtue of wilful limitation and sacrifice of selfish interests, both material and psychological and voluntarily chosen course of love, sympathy, service and cooperation. Social altruism is its general principle. Spirituality is its metaphysical foundation Development of human brain and mind has caused an augmentation of adverse sentiments of anger, hostility, en-

mity, and hatred. Hatred is a peculiarly human sentiment. It is also the root of duality in man All forms of conflict, alienation and disregard can be reduced or traced to hatred A psychology of cordiality thus becomes the most important and also the most difficult ideal of man's cultural discipline. Faith in spiritual non-duality affords the deepest inspiration for this discipline.

It is in this background that the value of Upanishadic spiritualism as a basis of general human relationship of the cordial kind can be understood It also forms the basis for particular human affections based on relations of blood and biology e g relations of parents and children, of husband and wife etc But in particular human affections some natural spontaneous inspiration works in a more refined form than it works among animals That is due to greater development of brain and mind among human beings Greater expression of spiritual reality in man can also be regarded as the reason for it[1] Higher intelligence and other conditions of human childhood, form a natural occasion for greater expression of spiritual feeling possible for human beings. Particular human affections based on blood and biology are not completely natural i e completely determined by natural conditions of human life and childhood These are also essentially inspired by spiritual feeling which is an expression and cultivation in human life These also are modes of spiritual feeling They are facilitated by relationship of blood and biology only when they are taken to form basis for expression of spiritual feeling and are utilized as occasions for such feeling Otherwise when spiritual feeling of love is not available to utilize them as occasions for its expressions, these relations cease to have any human meaning. In fact they are negated by adverse and antagonistic relations. They did not exist in barbaric times of earliest human history and they are many times completely contradicted in the actions and antagonistic relations of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers etc.

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1 पुरुषे त्वाविस्तरदात्मा । ऐतरेय आरण्यक

So ultimately and originally what appears as a particular human relationship is actually a particular mode of general human relationship The latter is essentially spiritual and is in the particular context facilitated in particular modes presented by particular relationships determined by blood and biology The more distant and less determined by blood and biology is the relation and contact of people, the more is the demand for general human relationship which is governed by spirituality in a greater degree. Spirit is the non-individualistic, non-dualistic, blissful essence of human existence. It is transcendent in nature and is not determined by any dualistic modes of intellect, ego, mind, body, senses, objects etc It is by virtue of this transcendence that it is capable of inspiring general human relationship where no genetic relations of blood and biology are operative as occasions for facilitation of cordial relationship. As the relations governed by blood and biology are very limited, and because they become feeble as the relationship becomes distant, it is only by the general human relationship that cordiality in human society can be possible. In fact it has been so in the history of human society. Till the cords of blood and biology worked effectively human organization remained confined to clans and tribes What is understood to be a general human society has developed only when organization extended beyond the confinement of relationship of blood and biology i e. when man came to find and feel related to man merely as man. It is this general human relationship which has been developing in society and is becoming a deeper and deeper basis of cultural development of society.

This general human relationship of man is based on love and affection which is essentially spiritual in character. The fundamental principle of this general human relationship is non-duality which can be understood as non-alienation in terms of modern philosophy and which positively expresses in affiliation and love This principle is the cardinal tenet of Advaita Vedanta, if it is understood in humanistic terms rather than in terms of

metaphysical abstractions The Isha Upanishad contains this cardinal principle of the Vedanta in a more concrete form than any other Upanishad The very first verse of Isha Upanishad states in the most general and the widest form the general principle of life which alone can ensure cordiality of human relations in society In the general form this principle of integrating objects, acts etc with the idea of supreme spiritual being is repeatedly characterized in Upanishads as non-dualistic Concretely and particularly it comes to contentment and consecretion of objects and acts to divinity. The actions inspired by non-dualistic spirituality will be restrained in nature and will be altruistic in effect

One who realizes inner integrality and non-duality in spirit finds all beings, after such realization, to be in a cordial state in their spiritual being He feels himself to be cordial with all beings. Hence he does not hate anybody. Spiritual non-duality leads to inner affiliation which is the principle of love and prevents alienation which causes hatred Love and hatred are the two primary poles of social relationship Love signifies the positive pole of social affiliation and integrity Hatred forms the negative pole of alienation and hostility.

The above idea is contained in the sixth verse of the Isha Upanishad This one verse forms the supreme gospel of social life and relationship.[2] The seventh verse elucidates the personal psychological effect of the observance of the principle of affiliation contained in the sixth verse One who realizes inner spiritual non-duality with and among all beings and thus visualizes their oneness (integrity) of being, does neither feel infatuation with anything or person, nor does he consequently leave any occasion for sorrow in his life[3] In fact sorrow is the reflective

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2 यस्तु सर्वाणि भुतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥ ईश० उप ६

3 तत्र को मोह क शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यत । ईश उप० ७

consequence of infatuation. Infatuation is egoistic identification of one's being with some other thing or person. When this identification is damaged by some inevitability it results in sorrow. Inner spiritual non-duality prevents such infatuation and identification. Thus it prevents sorrow and promotes love and joy in life.

This inner and spiritual non-duality and integrality constitutes the deeper principle of man's being and existence. Externally man appears to be an individual being limited in his physical individuality and isolation. But internally the real existence of man is not contained in this individuality and isolation. It finds its fullness in inner and spiritual non-duality in which individuality and isolation are transcended. This deeper truth of man's existence is elucidated in the parable of Prajapati found in the beginning of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Prajapati was alone in the beginning of creation, as no creatures had been created till then. He did not enjoy with himself alone. Hence he created the copular world.[4] This parable of Prajapati signifies tnat the deeper truth of life is joy and it cannot be realized in isolated individuality or individualities. It can be realized only in inner and spiritual non-duality and integrity which can concretely and empirically realized in a diversity of beings.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad further elucidates the idea of social non-duality and realization of fullness of being through it. Supreme spirit desired to multiply in conjugal partners & progeny in whom it could establish inner and spiritual non-duality & integrity. Without such non-duality it feels itself to be incomplete in isolation.[5] It is in spiritual non-duality that it finds fullness of its being. Natural conjugal relationship and bonds with progeny afford a natural facilitation for spiritual non-duality, which is to be extended beyond such natural limits for realizing

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4 तम्मात् न एकाकी न रेमे । वृह० उप० १, ४, ३

5 अकृत्स्न एव तावन्मन्यते । छां० १-४-१७

greater fullness of being. Realization of spiritual non-duality is fulfilment of spiritual knowledge and understanding, whereby human beings realize fullness of their being. This is also the principle which forms human beings into a social whole.[6] Forming a social whole is the greatest enrichment and highest fulfilment of the existence of man. It is the maximization of man's being as a fact of immediate realization.

Spiritual cooperation is the practical mode of establishing this inner non-duality in concrete life. This mode has been emphasised at several places in the Upanishads, mainly in the context of spiritual learning and spiritual aspiration. But it can be (and should be) extended to other spheres of concrete life Spiritual cooperation is a general attitude of dynamic non-dualism which is not confined to learning, but which in fact, can be extended to other spheres of social and active life with more concrete and more convincing experience of non-dualistic spiritual delight Indications of such extension of spiritual cooperation are found in the Upanishads. The Shantipatha commonly found in the Taittiriya and the Shwetashwatara Upanishad contains the famous prayer for common benefit and cooperative learning.[7] It is to be noticed that cooperation is understood in the Upanishads in its deeper and more democratic form as working together and enjoying together the fruit of common enterprise Togetherness is the truer essence of cooperation It overcomes the duality of isolation and the unspirituality of alienation. It also facilitates the spirituality of non-duality. It is only in the context of the Upanishadic situation of instruction to disciples that cooperation is taken to apply to learning. Otherwise the words of the Shantipath for cooperation are general

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6 छा० उप० १-४-१७

7 सह नौ अवतु. श्वे०

in connotation and apply to every kind of activity.[8] The Taittiriya Upanishad contains in its first chapter a prayer in which teacher and disciple (and it can be any other persons) aspire for common attainment of renown and spiritual excellence.[9] In the Shantipatha they also pray to overcome jealousy.[10] It affirms the spiritual non-duality implied in all earnest co-operation. Jealousy is a relative form of alienation which causes duality. Transcendence of jealousy in life facilities expression and experience of spiritual non-duality and infess delight and devotion in our aspirations and enterprizes

Spiritual cooperation which forms the cardinal social tenet of the Upanishads is the fundamental principle of social life and social relations. By its concrete and wider application it can inspire and enrich all particular social relationship. Many social relationships are recognised in the Upanishads also But in the context of general human relationship it is the regard for guests which is a most remarkable feature of Indian culture and which is most distinctly affirmed in the Upanishads also. The story of Nachiketas found in the Katha Upanishad illustrates the Indian regard for guest in the most illuminating way. Yama, the God of death, observes the rule of hospitality so sincerely that he apologises to Nachiketa for having kept him waiting for three days and grants him three boons for compensation and appeasement The guest is regarded as godly and is to be treated bounteously. He is deemed to be fiery and capable of burning the host by the fire of his displeasure. The guest is not always a familiar person. He can be a stranger. But he is to be treated cordially. Indian cultural tradition emphasises the observance of hospitality towards strangers who needed food and shelter. Such need was common in India in the context of

8 सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।

9 सह नौ यशः सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम् । तै० उप० १-३-१

10 मा विद्विषावहै ।

travelling in extensive Indian plans The Taittiriya Upanishad affords Spiritual confirmation of this custom of hospitality towards strangers when it says that 'one should not refuse shelter to any stranger.'[11] Liberal hospitality is the most general basis of social relations

All these social relations are considered to be essentially spiritual in the Upanishads Yajnavalkyas declares in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the context of his spiritual instructions to his spiritually disposed wife Maitreyi that relations are not dear for their own sake, that is not for their social or natural reasons, but for spiritual cordiality which underlies them Without spiritual cordiality they will cease to be, and we see relations breaking for want of spiritual cordiality Natural bonds and selfish considerations cannot sustain social relations breaking for want of spiritual cordiality. Natural bonds and selfish considerations cannot sustain social relations. These can be sustained only by unselfish non-dualistic spiritual cordiality which transcends all empirical conditions though it may foster them as concrete schema of social cohesion.



11 न कचन वसतौ प्रत्याक्षीत् । तै० ३-१०-१

## CHAPTER XVIII

# PATRIARCHAL RELATIONS

It is indicated in the previous chapter that the Upanishadic spiritualism affords a deep and sound basis for general human relationship. Spiritual non-dualism promotes fundamental principles of love and affiliation which cordially relate man to man, without any particular social determinations. Spiritual humanism of the Upanishads is a most profound basis of social relations both in their general and particular form. Main social relations also find a due consideration in the Upanishads, foremost among them are the patriarchal relations. The supreme importance of these relations in the Upanishads is culturally and histocrically justified. Parental relationship is naturally fundamental as society has grown by that relationship. It has also contributed to the cultural development of society to a large extent. But the natural determination of parental relationship limits its cultural possibilities It is the patriarchal relationship which is of supreme importance from the point of view of cultural development of society. It is in and through this relationship that the natural limitations of parenatal relationship are overcome, and pursuit of higher cultural values is aspired and cultural development is made the growing tradition of seciety. It makes a supreme social synthesis if the two relationships indicated above approximate to each other and reinforce each other by their respective virtuts. If the parental relationship overcomes its natural limitations and adopts the cultural urge of patriarchal relationship it endows the cultural development with the warmth and beauty of love. So also if patriarchal relationship adopts the spirit of parental love, it softens and sweetens the rigour of disciplinary dictatorship which has charactericed ancient teaching in all societies. The former trend is more distinctly found in Upanishadic tradition of teaching than it can be found in any other ancient society.

Several Upanishadic fathers are found acting as spiritual teachers of their sons A long tradition of this trend can be found in the families of the Muslim musicians of medieval and modern India. The second trend is more difficult and rare as it requires the ispirations of a concrete spiritualism and tender humanism towards young disciples which has been revealed only recently by modern educational psychology and which was not available to ancient teachers in any country Only some mild traces of it are found in the Upanishads.

However the patriarchal relationship is the dominant form of social relationship found in the Upanishads. Even fathers are seen to be acting more as preceptors and less as fathers The dominance of patriachal relationship is natural to Upanishads as they embody the spiritual teachings of ancient Indian sages which they imparted to devoted disciples at close spirituo-academic sessions which characterize the Upanishadic method of teaching. The hermitages of these sages were spiritual seminaries of ancient India and the Upanishads embody the teachings which were imparted to disciples in the tutorials held in these seminaries. The serene simplicity of the teachings imparted in these tutorials is consonant with the deep spiritual content of these teachings Though the saintly teachers are not generally moved by tender sentiments towards their disciples and they can occasionally be accused of harshness, the general temper of their teaching is marked with simplicity and softness They believed that spiritual learning demands hard penance and spiritual discipline They observed it themselves and expected their disciples to observe it devotedly. Several examples of simple and sweet teachings can be cited from the Upanishads Whatever reticense or strictness about teaching is traceable in the temper of Upanishadic teachers, is due to their faith in the invaluable supremacy of spiritual knowledge and in the extreme difficulty of spiritual realization.

The Upanishadic teachers regarded spiritual knowledge as

much more valuable than the empire of the three worlds.[1] They also believed that spiritual realization was extremely difficult. It was as difficult as to walk on the sharp edge of a sword[2] The Gita elucidates the difficulty of spiritual realization in its famous statement that rarely one person in a thousand aspires for it and hardly one among the aspirants attains it.[3] Some reticense and strictness in imparting such valuable spiritual knowledge is easily understandable. But the Upanishadic teachers are found to be kindly disposed towards disciples and towards imparting spiritual knowledge to them Even when they believe that it is only from and by personal contact with a realized teacher that spiritual knowledge can be obtained[4] they were not inflated by the idea of their importance and were always inclined to impart knowledge to devoted disciples If they ever delayed instruction it was only to test the keenness of the disciple about it and to ensure this keenness. But they denied instruction to none. On the other hand they considered it their sacred duty disclose the truth to deserving disciples. Sage Pippalada answered modestly to the questions of the six young sages who came to him to ask some metaphysical questions. The sixth questioner expresses the humility and simplicity which is characteristic of Upanishadic sages.

The disciples were required to approach the preceptor with sacrificial fuel in their hand.[5] That was a sign of service to preceptor and showed devotion to learning. Disciples used to live with their preceptors in their hermitages. The preceptor provided them food and clothes. It is only after they completed their course of learning and prepared to return home, that the pre-

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1 छां० उप० ३-११-६

2 क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया । कठ उप० १-३-१४

3 गीता ७-३,१

4 आचार्यवान्पुरुषो वेद । छां० उप० ६-१४-२

5 समित्पाणिः मुं० उप० १-२-१२

ceptors advised them to send some money at their convenience[6]. Fetching fuel and water for the preceptor for sacrifice etc. was a simple and delightful duty of young disciples. Grazing their cows was a sport, a duty for getting milk for themselves. There is mention in the Upanishads of a rather severe test described as 'carrying fire on the head' by disciples in order to convince the preceptor of their sincerity about spiritual learning. But it is not sure that it was a mark of cruelty on the part of preceptors Fire was important and rare in those ancient times. Therefore it had to be continuously maintained in hermitages and homes. The match-stick and inflammables had not yet been invented. Hence, like fuel, carrying of fire to the preceptor was considered to be a mark of devotion. It is not clear how and why the fire had to be carried on head. The intention was not surely to burn the head of disciples. It could be carried over a bundle of fuel borne on head It needed care but was not certainly for cruelty. There are no examples of torture of disciples by preceptors They were mostly willing to impart knowledge, and were only rarely reticent, and that also only to delay instruction in order to be convinced of the kenness of the disciple about learning.

The importance of spiritual learning, and with it of the preceptors, is evidenced in almost all the Upanishads Even the small Upanishads like Isha and Kena contains reverenceful references to the preceptorial tradition of spiritual learning. The sages in the Isha Upanishad remember with reverence the teachings of ancient preceptors about the path of spiritual realization[7] so does the Kena Upanishad also.[8] The allegory of Yaksha contained in the third chapter of the Kena Upanishad is an example of ancient method of spiritual instruction The Katha Upanishad conains the metaphysical teachings imparted

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6 आचार्याय प्रियं धनमाहृत्य । तै० उप० १-११

7 ये नस्तद् विचचक्षिरे । ईश उप १०

8 ये नस्तद् व्याचचक्षिरे । केन उप० १-३

to Nachiketas by the Lord of Death. Both the reticence and readiness of Yama about instructing Nachiketas highlight the wholesome attitude of Upanishads about imparting spiritual knowledge. Yama does not refuse to impart knowledge to Nachiketas but only tests his sincerity and keenness by dissuading him from it by offering to him celestial temptations. But when Nachiketas is found unmoved by these temptations, Yama reveals to him the deepest truths of life and death.

The Prashna Upanishad is designated so after its interrogative character. Six young sages come to sage Pippalada to ask him about some important philosophical questions. Sage Pippalada welcomes them with utmost courtesy and humility and answers their questions with gentle courtesy. The sixth sage expresses in the introduction to his question the humility which characterizes the Upanishadic sages. He says that when a prince came to ask a question to him he said he would certainly tell him if he knew things. A teacher who tells a lie is destroyed like a drying tree.[9] The attitude of the Prashna Upanishad exemplifies the openness and modesty with which Upanishadic sages imparted knowledge to sincere inquirers There is no indication of reticence or unwillingness to impart knowledge. All Upanishads are collections of teachings which were imparted by sages to disciples at esoteric sessions which formed the method of teaching for the sages of Upanishads.

The Taittiriya Upanishad contains the famous Convocation Address delivered by the preceptor to a disciple when he completed his course and prepared for parting from the preceptor. This address is indicative of the simplicity and humility of the Upanishadic teachers They asked their disciplines to tell the truth, to act righteously, to continue their studies, to respect their parents, to follow the noble deeds of their preceptors

9 समूलो वा परिशुष्यति । प्रश्न उप० ६-१

and not to immitate their objectionable acts[10] The Shwetashwatara Upanishad opens with a session of sages who inquire together into the cause of the universe and the principle which sustains life[11] It is an example of cooperative method of spiritual inquiry which characterizes Upanishadic system of spiritual education.

The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads are large compendiums of Upanishadic teachings They contain accounts of several symposia and sessions organized by enlightened kings for discussing about metaphysical and spiritual matters Stories of several disciples are also narrated in these Upanishads Sage Ushasti prepares himself to attend such a session organised by a king.[12] King Janashruti approaches a cynical sage Raikva to inquire about some mystical truth[13] King Ashwapati is reported to have organized a large seminar of sages for discussing philosophical questions[14] Ajatashatru and Janaka are represented in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as saintly kings who often invited sages to discuss philosophical questions and frequently organized seminars of sages for such discussions[15] The interest of kings in philosophical and spiritual matters shows the intellectual awakening that had been created by sages in those ancient times in India Such an awakening could not be possible without the openness and humility of sages The modest answer of Yajnavalkya in a large session organised by king Janaka, is a testimony to intellectual humility of sages[16]

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10 यान्यस्माक मुचरितानि तानि त्वयोपास्यानि नो इतराणि । तै० १-११

11 श्वे० उप० १-१

12 छा० उप० १-६

13 छा० उप० ४-१

14 छा० उप० ५-११

15 वृह० उप० २-१-१, ३-१-१

16 नमो वय ब्रह्मिष्ठाय कुर्म । वृह० उप० ३-१-२

The story of Gargi is of course, an example of intolerance of an Upanishadic sage. Yajnawalkya became exasperated by unending questions of Gargi and cursed that her head would fall if she asked further question.[17] But this intolerance seems to be exceptional. The general attitude of Upanishadic teachers is liberal and modest towards disciples and inquirers The intolerance of Yajnavalka was incited by endless questioning by Gargi about an unanswerable metaphysical matter. Though such intolerance is not commendable for spiritual sages, it is understandable and pardonable, the more so as it is rare and exceptional

There is a rare example of preceptorial reticence to impart instructions in the Chhandogya Upanishad. Upakosala stayed with his teacher Satyakama for twelve years and served him and his fires devotedly. The teacher gave instructions to other disciples, but denied them to Upakosala. Upon this Upakosala went on hungerstrike. Then the teacher's wife prayed to the teacher and pursuaded him to impart knowledge to the protesting disciple.[18]

Two methods of teaching were prevalent in the Upanishads. One is of unreserved instructions which are found almost in all the Upanishads. The other is of directing the disciple to observe penance and realize the truth for himself. The former is the intellectual method and the latter is spiritual. Both are complementary methods The former shows the simplicity and modesty of teachers The latter shows their regard for independence of the disciple and for directness of spiritual truth Bhrigu in the Taittiriya Upanishad[19] was asked by his father to observe penance and realize the truth for himself. Bhrigu rea-

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17 बृह० उप० ३-६-१

18 छा० उप० ४-१०-२

19 यपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तै० उप० ३-२

lizes Bliss as the reality after several tentative trials. Shwetaketu shows arrogance after long penance and learning with a teacher On this his father instructs him about spiritual reality.

Spiritual knowledge is difficult to attain. Hence the importance of teacher is emphasised in the Upanishads It is said that one can gain knowledge only with the help of a teacher[20] Only that knowledge which is received from a teacher is sound and fruitful[21] The Katha Upanishad urges seekers of truth to approach good teachers and to receive spiritual enlightenment from them[22] The disciples lived with teachers and were therefore called 'antevasi'—one who lived nearby. Valuable spiritual knowledge was imparted by teachers only to their elder sons or to dear disciples[23] The disciples were loved by their preceptors like their sons and were imparted highest spiritual knowledge Disciples also served their teachers with divine reverence Such close academic relations alone could ensure the success of spiritual quest and its continuity in the educational tradition of the society.



20 आचार्यवान् पुरुपो वेद । छा० ६-१४-२

21 आचार्याद्धैव विद्या विदिता सविष्ठ प्रापति । छा० ४-६-३

22 प्राप्यवरान्निवोधत । कठ उप०

23 ज्येष्ठाय पुत्राय पिता ब्रह्म प्रब्रूयात् प्रणाय्याय वाऽन्तेवासिने ।

छा० उप० ३-११-५

CHAPTER XIX

# PARENTAL RELATIONS

Paretal relations are natural and they are based on biologi cal process of generation combined with the socio-cultural phenomenon of marriage, while patriarchal relations are cultural as they are not based on any natural process but are developed in course of the cultural development in society. These relations are cultivated for transmission and expansion of knowledge in society. The dominance of patriarchal relations in the Upanishads is a sign of development of knowledge and of the tradition of learning in ancient Indian society. The knowledge which was imparted by sages in the forest hermitages to deserving disciples was primarily spiritual. This is an evidence of the altitudes which cultural development had reached in Upanishadic times The supreme value of spiritual knowledge further confirms the high altitudes of cultural appreciation attained in Upanishadic society.

Parental relations also are endowed with great cultural and spiritual value in the light of spiritual advancement that prevailed in Upanishadic society. The natural primacy of these relations is duly recognised in Upanishads. Parents are regarded with great reverence in Indian tradition. They are accorded a divine status along with the guest and the Guru (teacher). The Upanishads uphold that tradition which had come to be established in earlier Vedic times The Convocation Address to parting disciples found in the Taittiriya Upanishad contains instructions to young graduates to treat their parents with divine regard.[1] The primacy of the mother among parents is a cultural relic of matriarchal age during which the Mother had come to be defied in society. Matriarchy and primacy of the mother are cultural

1 मातृ देवो भव पितृ देवो भव । तै० उप० १-११

consequences of the feminine emphasis in the natural phenomenon of generation. The mother bears and breeds the child. The father plays an auxiliary (though necessary) role in sexual impregnation after which he had no responsibilities about the child for a long time until matrimonial bonds were strengthened in social tradition The primacy of mother is testified by the order observed in the Taittiriya convocation.[2] The Aitareya Upanishad also shows a great regard for the expectant mother.[3] The primacy of mother permeates Indian culture and language and is almost intentionally observed by authors like Kalidasa and Tulsidas[4]

But will all the cultural regard shown to the mother, the father came to dominate in society due to several bio-economic reasons Agriculture, industry and education came to be mainly male occupations and women were confined chiefly to domestic affairs The Upanishads are ancient educational treatises They contain glimpses of spiritual quest of ancient sages which was considered to be the supreme educational task in ancient times in India Spirit is universal reality and it concerns women as much as it concerns men. But the intellectual and ascetic quest of spirit which dominates Upanishads is more suited to men than to women who had greater domestic responsibilities There are of course two women in the Upanishads who are interesed in spiritual and metaphysical inquiry They also are placed in the position of amateur inquirers The teachers and students of the Upanishads are exclusively males Some of the teachers are fathers who initiate and instruct their sons in spiritual doctrine. Saintly fathers considered it highly important to initiate their sons in spiritual learning They regarded spiritual knowledge as more

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2 तै० उप० १-११

3 सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या । ऐत० उप० २-१-३

4 पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ । रघुवश मगलाचरण ।
भवानी शकरौ वन्दे । रामचरितमानस मंगलाचरण ।

5 छा० उप० ३-११-६

valuable than the empire of the world' and were keen to impart it to their sons.[6] Some fathers are reported to have sent their sons to other teachers whom they regarded as more competent for spiritual instruction. Shwetaketu is an example of such a son whom his father sent to another teacher for spiritual learning[7] Continuation of spiritual knowledg in the family was considered to be of supreme importance by Upanishadic sages.[8]

The maternal geneologies of sages found in Upanishads are reminiscent of antiquity in which maternal influence was dominant. But in the Upanishadic period itself paternal dominance was fully established and the aweful regard for fathers came to be customary in society. It continued to prevail in India for long after the Upanishads. The paternal dominance was often characterized by paternal arrogance and rarely by tender paternal emotion for the son. The story of Nachiketas found in the Katha Upanishad is an example of paternal arrogance. The father of Nachiketas, a great sage named Ushanas, became angry with him merely for an innocent interrogation and condemned him to the land of death[9] Bhrigu and Shwetaketu are examples of sons who are instructed by their fathers in spiritual knowledge. Though the latter shows slight intellectual arrogance after he returns from his former teacher, both the young aspirants exhibit due obedience and humility in following the instructions of their fathers, as do most of the other disciples Though the examples of paternal arrogance also are rare in the Upanishads, the tender parental sentiment is not evident in them. A rare example of motherly compassion is to be found in the Chhandogya Upanishads where the teacher's wife appeals to a student to break his hun-

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6 ज्येष्ठाय पुत्राय व पिता ब्रह्म प्रब्रूयात्। छां० उप० ३-११-५

7 वृह० उप० ६-२-४

8 नाऽस्य कुले ऽब्रह्मविद्भवति। मा० १०

9 कठ उप० १-१-४

ger strike and to take food and also impels her husband to impart spiritual instruction to the protesting student, which was unduly delayed by the preceptor[10]

Though most of the sages of the Upanishads lived with their wives in hermitages, yet there is little touch of parental love in the Upanishads It is strange that while sex is given due place in the Upanishads, there is no sign of conjugal love or parental affection in them, even when the son was considered to be necessary for fulfilment of life and its posthumous obligations.[11] It is said in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that 'a man's life is not complete without a wife and a son'[12] The realm of human existence cannot be conquered without a son[13] The son redeems a man from all apprehensions of misery in after-life which is feared much[14] It seems that while much importance was attached to son in Indian tradition, due affection was not afforded to him in conduct of life, particularly in the learned society The reason of it is to be sought in the alienating character of intellect and its effect on saintly life in spite of all professions of spirituality A rare statement found in the Brihadaranyaka contains the declartion of sages that family and children are redundant to spiritual aspiration[15] It indicates the unfortunate incoherence of spirituality with life which has prevailed in Vedanta from the Upanishads to the latest works The concrete spiritual truth of life which is revealed in the Isha Upanishad and according to which all mankind is to be comprehended in spiritual love, was not scrutinized in the practical domestic

10 छाँ० उप० ४-१०-२

11 छा० उप० १-५-१७

12 छा० उप० १-४-१६

13 छा० उप० १-५-१७

14 छा० उप० १-४-१६

15 बृह० उप० ४-३-२२

life of sages. Such nemesis of spiritualism is responsible for the social and political tragedy of India characterized by divisions in society and defeats in history.

The parental relations are as erratic and one sided in the Upanishads as they have been in Indian society. Indian tradition has emphatically demanded reverence for parents from children, but it has not at all emphasised the paternal responsibility for treating children with consideration and affection due to tender age. The reverence for parents is demanded in the Taittiriya convocation as the first duty of a man's life[16] Nachiketas has asked appeasement of his father's anger as the first boon from Yama the Lord of death.[17] Examples of paternal kindness and consideration are scarce in Indian tradition and history while there are many instances in which son's obedience to fathers has been glorified as a sign of greatness. Yayati and Bhishma sacrificed the joy of thtir youth for their fathers But there are no examples of sacrifice by any father for his son.

But except for the unwarranted anger of Ushanas upon his noble son, Nachiketas there are no instances of paternal strictness over sons at least in the Upanishads, though such arrogant authority characterized the attitude of fathers towards sons in Indian social tradition. Even neutral mildenss of fathers is creditable for Upanishadic sages in such a tradition. They are quite modest and liberal in their tutorial relationship with sons and other disciples They were keen to impart spiritual knowledge particularly to their sons and to maintain continuity of spiritual enlightenment in their family. But more wholesome and affectionate parental relations could be possible, if the concrete spiritualism and humanism of Isha Upanishad were applied to paternal relations in domestic life and they can be possible in every age. They can bridge the generation-gap which is created by lack of concrete spiritualism on both sides

16 मातृ देवो भव पितृ देवो भव । तै० उप० १-११

17 कठ उप० १-१-१०

CHAPTER XX

# DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Domestic relation of husband and wife is a most fundamental social value. It is prior to and primary in comparison to other relations which follow it Parental relation can be treated as primary in the sense that it brings into existence persons who are united in domestic relationship But the domestic relationship of parents precedes the birth of children However these two are the most primary social relationships and other relationships follow from these The domestic relationship is most original as it is with this that any kind of relationships started in society. Motherhood is the only natural relationship which can be treated as preceding it Matriarchal society of a rudimentary kind might have preceded the bisexual society with which social evolution began in any considerable form Domestic relationship can be taken as the foundation of human society. It is the only life-long relationship Other relationships may be culturally important but many of them endure only for a limited period and a part of life Parental relationship has its greater importance during the period of immaturity of childrtn. It weakens with the advancing age of children and becomes very feeble after they marry Parental and domestic relationships have their importance in respect to the age of a person. Their significance is in the order of social succession. They are not simultaneous and do not conflict with each other, except when parental relationship seeks to keep concurrence with domestic relationship when children marry. The patriarchal relationship is concurrent with parental relationship. The former is entirely cultural. It has no biological basis like the parental relationship It has been treated first due to its cultural importance in Upanishadic view of life The parental relationship also developed cultural dimensions chiefly in the context of education

of children. Hence it has been treated as next to patriarchal relationship.

Domestic relationship also developed innumerable and immensely rich cultural dimensions in the course of Indian tradition. It dominates the scene of popular Indian life. But the domestic life of the sages of the Upanishads and of their wives does not seem to partake in the cultural richness and radiance of domestic life which existed in Vedic times before Upanishads and which has continued after the Upanishads The sages of the Upanishads lived with their wives in the forest hermitages They have recognised due importance of sex in the texts of the Upanishads They had children and were keen to initiate them into spiritual education But they seem to have little sense of emotional responsibility towards their wives and children Actual renunciation of household is seen only in a rare example of Yajnavalkya who had two wives But those who did not formally renounce household seem to be resigned in house-hold. No touch of domestic sweetness is to be found in the Upanishads Wives seem to serve only as keepers of the hermitages of their saintly husbands with no emotional privileges of love That was perhaps on account of the dryness of intellectual pursuit of spiritual reality which in its concrete form should bestow love, affection and delight upon all modes of life The patriarchal arrogance emphasised the alienation which nullifies concrete realization of spirituality in life and which consequently mars the sweetness and joy of domestic life.

But the fact of domestic relationship is duly recognised in the Upanishads The sages of the Upanishads lived a simple and austere life of meditation and penance. But they were not ascetic in the sense of living without wives. Most of the Upanishadic sages are represented as having wives and living with them in forest hermitages. Those whose domestic context is not evident also seem to have wives as their conduct does not reflect the cynicism which develops in a person or even in a saint who

happens to have no wife The company and relationship of women soften a man even if he does not show any sweetness in his conduct He will be more cynical without a wife than he is when he has one The modest conduct of sage Pippalada precludes the cynicism which assails a man when deprived of a wife. So also the genial spirit of the Taittiriya convocation reflects the normalcy and wholesomeness of the temperament which is not likely to be attained without the tender touch of women in life The cynical sage Raikva also is softened by the king's offer of his daughter to him His softer tone after the offer and his acceptance of the gift is a rare evidence of the fact that the sages of the Upanishads, with all their apparent and avowed ascetism, appreciated the need and value of domestic relationship for practical living

Most of the sages of the Upanishads are married persons who lived in forest hermitages with their wives Sage Ushasti is presented in the beginning of the Chhandogya Upanishad as having a young wife[1] Sage Satyakama also lived with his wife who persuaded him to impart spiritual instruction to his agitating disciple Upakoṣala[2] Yajnavalkya, the greatest sage of the Upanishad, is reported in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad to be living with his two wives He used to bring money and cows from saintly king Janaka as a reward for his learned discourses with the king. He is presented as preparing to take sannyasa at a stage and divide his wealth between his two wives. But no other sages are reported to be inclined towards taking Sannyasa or as having renounced the household. A lone statement of the Brihadaranyaka cannot represent the general attitude of the sages of the Upanishads towards household and renunciation Understood more carefully it can be interpreted to mean only that involvement in and attachment with household cannot be conducive to spiritual

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1 छा० उप० १-१०-१

2 छा० उप० ४-१०-२

realization. This shows only the limitation of domestic relationtionship, like all other means, in regard to self-realization. But it does not discount the value of household for practical living. Nor does it prelude the possibility of endowing household with the light and love of spiritual non-duality though such a possibility has neither been imagined by the sages of the Upanishads nor has it been acceptable to later followers of the Vedanta.

Thus, though the sages of the Upanishads, due to their alienating intellectualism, could not infuse spiritual joy in their domestic life and could not give their wives the delight of love, they undoubtedly recognised the value of house-hold for practical living and for progeny, particularly for continuation of the tradition of spiritual knowledge.[3] They also recognised the place of sex in life. Ascetism in the Upanishads is normally not denial of sex in life Ascetism in the Upanishads is normally not understood as tentamount to celebacy. On the other hand cohabitation with one's own wife, particularly during night, is understood as being tentamount to Brahmacharya.[4] Brahmacharya of the Upanishadic sages is more spiritual than sexual. It is understood in the sense of sexual restraint and moderate mating with one's wife The importance of sex is elevated to metaphysical altitudes and sexual principle is aligned to the cosmic creative principle in the Prashna and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.[5] The original creator is imagined to have created the world from a bi-sexual unit which divided into separate sexes.[6] Sexual act is symbolised as a sacrifice[7] and mating is described in the end of the Brihadaranyaka as a religious ritual.[8] The sex organs are

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3 मा० उप० १०

4 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव यद् रात्रौ रत्या सयुज्यन्ते । प्रश्न उप १-१३

5 प्रश्न उप० १-४

6 वृह० उप० १-४-३

7 योषा वाव अग्नि वृह० उप० ६-४-३

8 मन्थकर्म वृह० उप० ६-४-३

deemed to be the site and centre of all delights of life[9] But with all this, it is surprising that the sages of the Upanishads do not seem to show any emotional affection or tender treatment towards their wives or children, though, it is true, that they are generally not hard to any of them They seem to be innocently indifferent to them

A rare example of compassionate consideration towards the expectant mother is to be found in the Aitareya Upanishad, where it is said that the woman bears the child in her womb and treats it with profound care Hence she also is to be treated with great care and compassion[10] The single statement of the Upanishad marks the depth to which sages realized the value of woman Though they do not seem to actualize the importance of this statement in their life, it can well form a gospel for affectionate and delightful domestic life.

An equally rare statement of Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the form of a simile in which spiritual realization is likened to the delight of conjugal embrace,[11] indicates the depth to which sages realized the emotional delight of domestic relations. Though they do not seem to actualize this romantic delight of love in their life, particularly due to their ascetic and intellectual inclination, this simile can form as a model for the integration of spiritual joy with domestic delight in the life of human society. The life of sages may not be a model of domestic happiness, but the principles of sex and conjugal relationships revealed by them can very well form the foundation of spiritualized conjugal love which has been symbolized in the myth of Shiva-Parvati and which can serve as the supreme domestic ideal for mankind

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9 सर्वेपामानन्दानामुपस्थ एकायनम् । बृह० उप० ४-५-१२

10 सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या । ऐत० उप० २-१-३

11 बृह० उप० ४-३-२१

## CHAPTER XXI

# FRATERNAL RELATIONS

Fraternal relations follow from domestic and parental relations, through the principle of generation. Marriage and mating brings about children who generally live together with their parents and develop fraternal affections by contact and culture. But rivalry among brothers is as natural as is affection among them. Infact rivality is more natural and affection is more a result of cultural cultivation. Indian history presents supreme examples of both fraternal rivalry and fraternal love. Mahabharata is a story of the former and Ramayana describes the glory of the latter. Kaurawas and Pandavas engage in a fatal fraternal feud, while Rama, Bharata and Lakshman shower highest love and sacrifice on one another.

Common fraternal relations are of a mixed kind Love and jealousy are mixed in them. Spiritual idealism which has developed in society through civilization is shared by every family in some measure Fraternal love follows from it Rivalry and jealousy is the consequenc of natural egoism and selfishness which are not completely conquered in civilization.

The Upanishads are spiritual gospels of India Spirituality is essence of love and cordiality. Spirituality expresses in non-duality which counteracts duality from which rivalry follows and generates love Thus as gospels of spirituality the Upanishads can be treated as gospels of love also. The principles of concrete spirituality realized in human relations, which are prominent in the Upanishads reveal the deepest and the most fundamental secrets of love. The principle of spiritual unity of men laid down in the Isha Upanishad is most notable in this context. It reveals how spiritual unity overcomes all hatred which is the

root of all alienation and consequent enmity[1] The spiritual gospel of Yajnavalkya contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad expresses the positive secret of love as spirituality i.e. non-duality[2] Yajnavalkya declares to his wife Maitreyi that the husband, wife or for that reason any other relations are not dear for their own sake but for the sake of (i e on account of) non-dual spirit which underlies their being and relationship[3] It is by virtue of spirit and its non-duality that cordial relations are fostered in human life Naturalists and individualists will not agree with this spiritual truth of life and will like to dismiss it as imaginary occultism But the truth of spiritual basis of love and cordiality in human relations is evident to every one including the naturalists and individualists Every body feels some love for his kins and receives it from them It is an integral feeling which can be immediately experienced but cannot be mediately expressed It is spiritual and non-dualistic, while all expression involves duality of subject, object and predicate

Thus though the fundamental principle of love is laid down in the Upanishads, yet it is surprising that it has not be expressed in concrete modes of human relations, nor is it elucidated in concrete instances of such relations Human relations are very meagrely mentioned in the Upanishads Youngmen, particularly students of spiritual knowledge, are appealed to respect their mother, father and teachers But their is no inkling of the love of elders for younger people in the Upanishads Much of it should not be expected in the tutorial context of the Upanishads But if the spiritual texts of Upanishads can afford ample space to deal with food and sex, they could very well spare a little space for dealing with concrete human relations The reverence required of the disciple for the preceptor is emphasised in the

1 ईश उप० ६

2 आत्मनस्तु-कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति । बृह० ४-५-६

3 बृह० उप० ४-५-६

Upasishads The preceptors show considerable modesty and simplicity in instructing disciples, yet no where in the Upanishads, any touch of affective tenderness is to be seen in the preceptors. Nor is any such feeling found in them for wives and sons. The daughter as daughter is not at all mentioned in the Upanishads. Nor is there any shadow of a sister on the Upanishadic horizon, not to say of the sweet and tender sentiment with which popular cultural tradition of India has treated the sister. The fraternal relations of brothers or friendly relations of persons of equal age which develops fraternity, are also not mentioned in the Upanishads Friendly relations of disciples of the same preceptor, which can so easily be expected, are also not traceable in the Upanishads

All this seems to be due to two reasons One is that the concrete spiritualism which follows from the metaphysical spiritualism of the Upanishads, is not duly appreciated by the sages of the Upanishads The other reason, which explains the first, is that the intensely intellectual approach of the sages, which is evident in the Upanishads inspite of their mysticism, precluded the possibility of such an affective disposition towards human relations Their lonely life in forest hermitage is a circumstantial reason for their not appreciating social relations sufficiently. No contexts of fraternal relations among the sages themselves are to be noted in the Upanishads

Thus fraternal relations which are the crux of other human relations are not presented in the Upanishads with due sentiment and appreciation No instances of these relations are to be found in the Upanishads, even when the sages of the Upanishads lived with their families There is no mention of children or disciples in plural number, which is necessary for fraternal or friendly relation. Only one disciple is seen seeking instructions or being imparted instruction Only one reference to six simultaneous inquires is found in the Prashna Upanishad But they also inquire individually (and not cooperatively as in a modern semi-

nar) about their separate problems and are instructed separately by sage Pippalada

Indra and Virochana are presented in a parable in the Chhandogya Upanishad as inquiring together about a common problem but they are inimical and not akin to each other because they belong to hostile communities

Assemblies of sages called by philosophical kings, are the only social situations found in the Upanishads But they are more like scholarly competitions of philosophers than like a brotherhood of spiritual seekers No philosophical or personal fraternal spirit is observable among them Every sage looks like a solitary traveller on the lonely path of spirituality They look like rivals in assemblies rather than like co-workers in the sphere of spirituality which alone forms basis of fraternity in human life

Thus fraternity is conspicuous in the Upanishad more by its complete absence than by its positive presence in any considerable degree Little fraternal feeling is to be found among the sages and their disciples or sons The social aridity of the lonely forest living of sages may be the circumstantial cause of it Lack of application of spiritualism to concrete human life seems to be the theoretical reason of it

Such a lack of fraternal feeling in the Upanishads is surprising in view of their Vedic heritage The Vedic Samhitas are abundantly social The hymns are a fruit of cooperative composition They were commonly sung in the families of sages to whom they are assigned now It should not be surprising if they were cooperatively composed in the families of poets If not a single hymn, at least Suktas and their collections may well be cooperative The performance of Vedic Sacrifices was a cooperative function The idea of froternity was cherished in the Vedas, though the likelihood of natural rivalry between kins was

clearly recognised. The Vedic hymn which appeals to brothers and sisters not to cherish rivalry between themselves, appeals to them to cultivate fraternal love but also pre-supposes at the same time, rivalry between them.[4] The fact of rivalry is certain and fraternal love is only an ideal possibility.

A solitary reference (to fraternal relations) found in the Chhandogya Upanishad resounds with the pre-suppositions of the Vedic hymn. It recalls the dis-behaviour of a person with his brother or sister alongwith father, mother and teacher and the condemnation which it invites from people as a social reaction to his behaviour.[5] Such a person is damned as a murderer of brother, sister, father or mother,[6] because he does not recognise the sanctity of these relations.

But like the Vedic hymn this Upanishadic statement also is indicative of the unpleasant reality of fraternal rivalries and implies fraternal love only as an ideal which does not seem to have been actualized and appreciated even in the Upanishads in any considerable measure.



4 मा भ्राता भ्रातरं द्विक्षन् मा स्वसारमुत स्वसा ।

5 छां० उप० ७-१५-२

6 छां० उप० ७-१५-२

## CHAPTER XXII

# COMMUNAL RELATIONS IN THE UPANISHADS

Communal relations are which obtain between different communities which compose a society Community is a limited group of persons bound more intimately among themselves, than with persons outside that group The cords that bind a community can be geneological, professional religious, cultural etc. Originally they were geneological, and professional affinity combined with it, as professions in ancient times were mostly family occupations Religious communities were created by Budhism, Jainism, Zorostrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam Cultural communities exist more evidently in India where people of different regions (now called states) entertain a common feeling by virtue of a common cultural heritage

Common feeling inspired by some affinity is the cardinal character of a community It is the cord which binds people together into a fraternity and heartens them by a feeling of belonging to a common group. Communities were created in human society by geneological kinship, geographical contiguity and professional affinity In India the formation of communities took the form of caste which was originally cultural but later became geneological and professional The Vedic creation of the caste was cultural particularly in regard to higher castes Brahmins were the custodians of culture and learning They were treated as the heads of society because culture and learning was regarded as highest value in Indian tradition. The Kshattriyas were also regarded as equally high because they were entrusted with the protection of people They were the arms of the society even as Brahmins represented the head of it The Kshattriyas were also armed for protection and fighting The Vaishyas were occupied with trade They were also expected to devote to cattle keeping and agriculture, which they later gave up as these oc-

pations were more arduous and less profitable Thus hard and dirty work was avoided by all the three higher castes and it was left to the fourth order of society which was designated as Shudra and was treated with dirision and suffered disadvantages of all kinds

Originating in the Vedic age these communities have continued till the present day without much change. All attempts from Buddha to Gandhi have failed to remove distinctions of castes. Caste or any other form of community is based on deep foundations of human sentiments and cannot be easily dissolved. Deep understanding of life is needed to conceive of the cords of communities and also to afford an alternative for communal divisions of society and to unite communities into an integrate nation Communities in other societies were not formed so strongly for cultural or professional reasons as in India Therefore they could more easily by united into religious or political nationalities But Indian communities are based on crisp cultural affinities And castes are based on professional geneological grounds which have become inveterate in tradition. It is scarcely understood by social reformers in India that caste were crystalized in the country due to cultural cohesion, and also because no wider alternative was afforded in ancient times like the political creed of Islam. Earlier reformers could not succeed because their universal humanism had no effective appeal to people. Buddhism was exiled from India, and Jainism has identified itself with a specific community strangely of commercial people Nationalism could comprehend communalism if it could be presented in an effective and inspiring form. But it could not be so presented. It has been rather negative agitative, sentimental and dubious due to superfluous allegiance Only a convincing, positive and strong nationalism can comprehend the communities by affording a higher alternative which will not devour them but would refine and harmonize them

The castes prevailed during the time of Upanishads There are references to Brahmins, and Kshattriyas particularly in the

Upanishads The Vaishyas perhaps are not mentioned at all in the Upanishads This shows the distance and discord of the materialism of the community of traders from and with the spiritualism of the Upanishads This also shows the deep disregard of traders for spiritual knowledge and confirms their lack of serious concern with the foundations of Indian culture The Shudras also are not evidently mentioned in the Upanishads Only a doubtful reference to them is found in the context of Raikva who may be taken to be a Shudra from his dirty way of living. The Vaishyas were not denied Vedic knowledge It was open to them. But they ignored it in their occupation with earning The Shudras were denied Vedic knowledge They were not encouraged about it and tradition made them uneligible for it

As the Vaishyas and Shudras are not mentioned in the Upanishads it cannot be imagined what kind of relationship they had with other communities The Upanishadic disregard for wealth and money does not indicate a possibility of cordial relations of sages with Vaishyas They do not seem to be financially supported by the traders They are liberally supported by kings, though relations with kings are not merely of material obligation but also of spiritual intercourse

There is considerable confusion in sociological understanding of the relations between different castes Superiority alienation and untouchability are the cardinal points according to which any understanding of these relations should be approached The original Vedic order evidently asserts the superiority of Brahmins It is no favour to a class, but an expression of the cultural valuation that prevailed in ancient Indian society But defence and administration entrusted to Kshattriyas are no less important Hence the Kshattriyas, particularly kings, were also held in high esteem, though ancient kings are often reported to show great regard for sages and learned people They protected and supported the forest hermitages Janaka, Janashruiti etc are represented in the Upanishads as kings who were highly regardful of sages and bounteous towards them

Some western scholars have tried to suggest an intellectual and spiritual rivalry between sages and princes i.e. between Brahmins and Ksattriyas, such rivalry is suggested as a reaction against the monopoly of Brahmins in spirituality and learning. Such monopoly is not a fact and there is no reason for it when Kshattriyas were allowed access to Vedic learning and both Kshattriyas and Vaishyas are required to learn Vedas They were not allowed to teach the Vedas. This prohibition was not a disregard of human rights, but an expedient motivated by a view about teaching Learning of a thing can be partial and ordinary. But for teaching a thing, and a highly technical, intricate and mystical thing like the Vedas, a thorough mastery is necessary. That required complete dedication to learning which made a man a Brahmin Such dedication was not possible for Kshattriyas and Vaishyas The Shudras could not even afford to learn it due to their occupation with crude work and could not observe the strict hygienic standard due to their involvement in dirty work. But the Brahmins freely taught the Kshattriyas and the Vaishyas They themselves became indifferent about learning due to their different disposition and occupation

The sages of the Upanishads are found imparting spiritual knowledge freely to disciples who come to them There are undoubtedly examples of a few sages like Haridrumata who seem to teach only Brahmin boys But great sages like Yajnavalkya are found instructing kings into deepest spiritual gospels without any such reservation The test by which Satyakama Jabala is confirmed to be a Brahmin is simplicity and honesty[1] Shankara has affirmed that Brahmins are simple by nature[2] Others are not natually so The reason of Brahmanical preference was not so much communal as ethical The hierarchy of communities

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1 छाँ० उप० ४-४-५

2 ऋजवो हि ब्राह्मणा नेतर स्वभावत ।

छाँ० उप० शकरभाष्य ४-४-५

was axiological and not communal preference or prejudice. There is only one statement where a king declares that this knowledge never went to a Brahmin before[3] Kshattriya kings are seen instructing Brahmins But this is not so much a proof of communal rivaltry as of freedom of knowledge. Statements like the above also indicate only that normally and generally spiritual learning became the monopoly of Brahmins not by any force but by their devotion and dedication

No signs of injustice to Shudras are traceable in the Upanishads Kshatriya kings are highly regardful of sages and are bounteous to them economically. The inclination of sages towards getting gifts from kings shows the dependence of sages on rich for money, a decadent attitude which was a consequence of Brahmanical neglect of economic independence, an attitude which has been largely responsible for cultural decadence in the country.



3 बृह० उप० ६-२-८

CHAPTER XXIII

# ROYAL RELATIONS IN THE UPANISHADS

The relations of the king with the people are an important part of social relations Many times they set up an ideal for relations of people among themselves. The king is taken to be an ideal in tradition. It is believed that the people of a place will be as the king is[1] They follow the king The Bhagwadgita lays down that people follow the conduct of elite of a society[2] Hence in Indian tradition the king is expected to be an ideal of people The kings of the royal house of Raghu are depicted by Kalidasa as the ideal persons[3] The very title of the king etymologically signifies the kings duty to keep his people happy.[4] King Dushyanta is depicted in Abhijnana Shakuntala to have domestic relations with his people He declared that if any person unfortunately loses a relation, he should treat the king as a substitute, except for relationships a substitution for which involves infamy[5] The king means the guardian of people and Praja which is Sanskrit synonym for people means children.[6] The people are the children of the king and are to be looked after as children

The ancient kings of India are represented as ideal persons dedicating their life for the good of the people Many kings are

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1 यथा राजा तथा प्रजा ।

2 गीता ३-२१

3 रघुवश सर्ग १

4 राजा प्रजा रंजन लब्धवर्णा ।

5 येन येन वियुज्यन्ते प्रजा· स्निग्धेन बन्धुना ।
स स पापाद् ऋते तासाम् दुष्यन्त इति घुष्यताम् ।

अभिज्ञान शाकुन्तल ।

6 प्रजा Means progeny ।

reported to have distributed all their wealth in charity like Raghu. They did not stick to kingdom. Many of them renounced the kingdom after their son came of age to take charge of the kingdom. Many of them devoted to spiritual learning and sacrifice. Saintly and learned kings were not uncommon in ancient India. They were charged with the protection of sages and their forest hermitages by the ethical codes It is under that tradition that Sita sought protection from King Rama after her second exile[7] Rarely an ancient Indian king is found to be a reveller in luxuries or a tyrant for people Kings of other countries are rarely found to be fond of learning and scarcely inclined towards spirituality. Learning and spirituality were never such a craze for people or kings in any other country as they were in India No other country is so well known for such a widespread tradition of forest hermitages as ancient India In no other country such a whole class of people devoted to the vocation of learning or to saintly life of spiritual quest in forest hermitages

The kings and sages of Upanishads are much in this ancient tradition of learning and spiritual quest Almost all the kings mentioned in the Upanishads are found to be interested in religious activities and spiritual discussions In addition to it they are bounteously charitable towards sages They offer to them liberal gifts of money and cows which were treated as a wealth in ancient India. The Chhandogya Upanishads contains in its very first chapter the story of sage Ushasti who was starving and who begged boiled pulses of an elephant driver in order to save his life Ushasti is represented as being anxious to attend the religious ritual of a sacrifice at the court of a king whose name is not mentioned Ushasti expected to get a good amount as gift at that sacrifice Ushasti had a discourse with the king at that sacrifice and a discussion with other ritualist scholars about the name and nature of the supreme deity who should be adored at

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7 तपस्विसामान्यमेवक्षणीया । रघुवश

the sacrifice.[8] Ushasti declares first sun, then vital being and ultimately food (grain) as the supreme deity to be adored. He received liberal gift of money from the king for his knowledge.

Next in the fourth chapter of the same Upanishad is found the story of king Janashruti who was famous for his philanthropy. Food was cooked in large quantities in his palace for being distributed He constructed houses of charity at several places in his kingdom with the idea that people will eat food offered by him [9] King Janashruti came to hear about the mystical fame of a cynical sage Raikva who lived in a cart and was believed to know some mystical secret about reality The king sent his soldiers to find out where the sage lived After long search soldiers found him sitting under his cart and scratching his body King Janashruti met him and offered to him large sums of money, cattle etc But the sage was not pleased to reveal to the king the mystical secret of reality which he was believed to know. The sage declined all these gifts and refused to instruct the king Upon this the king increased the amount and also presented his daughter to the cynical saint as his bride Pleased with the gift of king's daughter the sage was inclined to instruct him about the spiritual secret which he was believed to know. The story reveals king's curiosity about spiritual knowledge and confirms the extent of his keenness that he offered his daughter to a cynical sage The wisdom of the king in offering his daughter for knowledge to a cynical sage is doubtful but his keeness for spiritual knowledge is undoubtedly confirmed by the story. The mystical knowledge revealed by Raikva is the same as revealed by Ushasti that air, vital being and food-(grain) are the supreme supports of life [10] Another king Ashwapati is represented as a great custodian of mystical spiritual knowledge about which

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8 छां० उप० १-११-४

9 छां० उप० ४-१-१

10 छां० उप० अध्याय ४ खंड ३

some spiritualists named in the first chapter of Chhandogya Upanishad felt doubtful and therefore referred themselves to the king. Ashwapati was not only a great spiritualist but also a good ruler He boasted to those Brahmins who came to him that his kingdom was a heaven of peace and purity There was no thief, no drunkard, no uneducated person, no adulterer in his kingdom[11] The king explained to those Brahmins the idea of Vaishwanara Átman which they inquired of him That learned scholars and spiritualists should come to a king is sufficient proof to profundity of his spiritual knowledge for which he was famous besides being renowned for being an ideal ruler of an ideal kingdom the people of which were highly enlightened and moral and free from all evils

King Janaka was famous as a great spiritualist and as a great patron of spiritual sages and scholars He was the king of Mithila Ajatshatru a king of neighbouring kingdom of Kashi is represented in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as feeling jealous of him[12] He offered a thousand cows to sage Balaki who presented himself in his court and offered to instruct the king in Spiritual knowledge[13] The king disputed all spiritual proposals which the sage advanced and exhausted his knowledge Defeated by the king the sage himself sought to be instructed by the king[14] Upon this the king revealed some spiritual secrets to the sage by demonstrative observations of a sleeping person. He instructed him through these observations about the spirit which underlies the sleeping person and is experienced by him in sleep.

King Janaka is presented as the paragon of spiritual kings of ancient India He was so famous for his philanthrophical gifts

11 छा० उप० ५-११-५
12 बृह० उप० २-१-१
13 बृह० उप० २-१-१
14 बृह० उप० २-१-१४
15 बृह० उप० २-१-१५

to sages and scholars, that king Ajatashatru of his neighbouring kingdom of Kashi is found to feel jealous of him. King Janaka used to invite and welcome sages to his court where he used to hold large philosophical seminars. Philosophical and spiritual discussions were held in these seminars. King Janaka once offered a thousand cows with their horns mounted with gold[16] to the greatest spiritualist. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad describes in detail in chapter four discussions which were held by Janaka with sages and scholars Yajnavalkya, the greatest sage of the Upanishad, used to visit often the court of king Janaka and hold spiritual discourses with him for which the king rewarded him liberally

Another king Prawahana mentioned in the end of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is a philosophic king who discussed with a young sage Shwetaketu about the destiny of the soul after death[17] He asked the young sage questions which he could not answer and came back to his father to learn the answer of these questions.

Yama the king of the realm of death also is reported to be a custodian of the knowledge of the destiny of soul after death Nachiketas in the Katha Upanishad is found seeking the favour of Yama for disclosing to him the posthumous secrets of life.

The kings interested in spiritual knowledge are a unique glory of India. Their love of knowledg is remarkable. But no less remarkable is their philanthrophy towards sages and scholars They patronized and protected them, which is regarded as the responsibility of kings in Indian legal codes. Ashwapati is an example of a king who by his influence and administration made the whole population of his kingdom moral, righteous and pure in conduct of which he is justly proud.

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16 बृह० उप० ३-१-१

17 बृह० ६-२-२

## CHAPTER XXIV

# LACUNA IN SOCIAL VALUES IN UPANISHADS

Social values are realized in social relations which have developed in various forms in human society and civilization. The Upanishads are not completely oblivious of social values and social relations though they cannot be credited with appreciating them sufficiently They are primarily spiritual treatises. They are not so un-worldly as they have been presented to be yet they do not intend to devote to such an exploration of worldly values as they devote to that of spiritual value The sages of the Upanishads lived in lonely forest hermitages They were not in close and constant contact with society Nor had they a society of their own. A sage lived with his wife, children and disciples. No wider social intercourse was available to them to give them a deeper idea of social values and social relations Their ascetic disposition was further detrimental to their understanding of social relations Those who believe the Upanishads to be entirely spiritual and unworldly will be surprised to find such elaborate treatment of secular values as has been exposed in the foregoing chapter of this book Secular values are necessary in life Even sages and ascetics cannot avoid them They also need satisfaction of hunger, sex etc So the sages of the Upanishads have their views about secular values which have been presented in the foregoing chapters of this book.

But both their disposition and their circumstances were not sufficiently favourable for the appreciation of social values and social relations. As explorers of the deep secrets of spirit they have undoubtedly discovered the spiritual basis of social relations and have suggested the way for cultivating them in the richest and highest form. But they are not disposed or favourably

placed to appreciate duly the mutual obligations of deeper social relations. They have only recognised some cardinal social relations like the patriarcal, parental and domestic relations. The Patriarchal relations are most important in the tutorial context of the Upanishads. The parental and domestic relations are natural The mother and the father are accorded great respect in Indian tradition and according to it in the Upanishads also. The guest is regarded as divine and is to be treated well. The Upanishads also regard him divine along with the mother, father and the teacher So, main social relations are moderately recognised in the Upanishads, but no relations except the patriarchal relation are emphasised in them. Social Relations are mutual They are reciprocal They are to be observed on both sides. The obligations which they imply are also to be mutually recognised and observed by both the persons related. This mutuality is the crux of social relations. It is in regard to this mutuality that individual persons or social philosophers can fail. Individuals fail in this regard due to their greater inclination towards ego and self-interest. Social philosophies fail to recognise reciprocal obligations due to the limitations of understanding caused by ego and self-interest.

Human society has been dominated by males from very early times, ever since it turned to be paternal It was only in very primitive times that it was maternal. Then also it was one-sided and not mutual or reciprocal Maternal society lacked more severely the cooperation of males in domestic or social life. It is only in paternal society that some cooperation of males has been available. But in that also there has been great lacking in practical and more than that in emotional cooperation. Emotional aspects of social life have been revealed by modern psychological development It has been difficult for man to respond liberally to the demands of emotional responsiveness in social relations. It is heartening that both in regard to understanding and conduct there has been increasing advancement in the direction of social responsiveness.

The lacuna of Upanishads in this respect are not a peculiar failing of Upanishads which are not social but spiritual treatises The Upanishads share the lacuna with the general tradition of Indian society The teachers of the Upanishads are kind and considerate to their pupils in regard to teaching They are liberally disposed to impart spiritual knowledge which they considered more valuable than the empire of the world.[1] They are never niggardly in instructions towards deserving, devoted and sincere inquirers No examples of tutorial torture or harshness which have been prevalent in the sphere of teaching during the medieval times in India and the world are to be found in hermitary seminaries of Upanishadic sages. This is a great credit to sages of Upanishads. Their lack of due sentiment towards disciples is a part of parental emotional lacking which has been prevalent in paternal society The sages do not seem to be emotionally tender or sweet to their own sons and wives No examples of such tender emotion are to be seen in the Upanishads Though the Upanishadic sages regarded wife as necessary for fulfilment of life and felt incomplete without her, yet, they are not seen to be duly affectionate towards her On the other hand they seem to be emotionally indifferent to her Nor are they affectionately disposed towards sons, though they considered them important for their salvation particularly in the eschatological context

The reciprocal aspect of hospitality is also ignored in the Upanishads and in the general Indian tradition as well. Where it is emphasised that the guest is to be treated as a deity and he should be pleased in every way, it is not even indicated that the guest also should be considerate and careful abount inconveniencing the host Indian tradition is so one-sidedly hospitable that there is no separate word of host in Sanskrit language The guest is so supreme that the term for host (atitheyi) is derived from guest (atithi). The truth of the tradition of hospitality has been falsified by guests by complete disregard of consideration

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1 छां० उप० ३-११-५

for the host. Hence the tradition has grown into an utter dislike of guests by hosts.

Fraternal relations are undoubtedly a singular omission of Upanishads. There is no mention of brotherly relations between children of the sages or between their disciples. Relation of sister is an omission not only in the Upanishads but in the entire literature of India Rarely in any literary or philosophical work do we find a depiction of sosoral relations which are so beautifully integrated in the domestic culture of India. This omission marks the gulf between the literary culture and the living culture of India Friendly relations also are an omission like the fraternal relations

Communal culture of India is based on a cultural hierarchy, which is observed both by thinkers and the people. Even a learned king like Ashwapati hesitates to instruct a young aspirant due to the limitations of this hierarchy according to which instruction is a monopoly of Brahmins, and a Kshattriya is not entitled to it[2] Communal divisions worked quite amically in India because they were accepted by people as a divine ordinance. Not many instances of cruelty or conflict are to be found in this context. There is no considerable evidence of any rivalry between Brahmins and Kshattriyas in connection with spiritual knowledge The Western critics have only tried to distort facts in this context to prove such rivalry.

Other castes are not mentioned in the Upanishads. No division for or cordiality with them can be inferred from the Upanishads

Royal relations are found to be in excellent form in the Upanishads Though the kings are presented in the Upanishads

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2 अध्यापनमध्ययन यजन यजन तथा ।
दानं प्रतिग्रह चैव ब्रह्मकर्मस्वभाजम् ॥ —मनुस्मृति

only in spiritual context but the temper of kings towards sages and scholars shows their cultural as well as kingly excellence. The sages also are quite regardful of kings The relations between kings and people were quite amicable in ancient India The kings were guided by a royal idealism demanded of them by legal codes and religious tradition.

The spiritual basis of general human relations is revealed in the Upanishads But it is strange that the concrete fulfilment of spiritual cordiality is not expressed in any mode of social relations in the Upanishads No example of social expression of human sympathy or sentiment towards men is found in the Upanishads Nor is such sympathy or sentiment traceable in the domestic or patriarchal or even parental relations of the sages with their wives, pupils and sons It seems to be not so much an expression of their unsociality as of their social indifference. The modesty and sagacity expressed by them in their convocation address shows that they were quite capable of warm social relations, though the warmth is not evident in their view or in their behaviour.



## CHAPTER XXV

# TRANSVALUATION OF SOCIAL VALUES

Upanishadic axiology is realistic as well as idealistic. As realistic it recognises all earthly values The Upanishads are not so unworldly as they are presented to be. They are undoubtedly transcendental as they hold the transcendent spirit to be the supreme reality. But they do not deny other values of life and world. They are not world-negating or life-negating. Ample space is devoted in the texts of the Upanishads to the treatment of secular and social values. This recognition of values is not merely provisional but ultimate. There is no indication in the Upanishads that the sage of the Upanishads do not admit the ultimate value of secular and social modes of life The limitation of values are indicated in the Upanishads but nowhere are they totally denied or damned as provisional. Nachiketas points out the limitation of wealth in tht Katha Upanishad but nowhere is the importance of food, sex or other earthly values is denied. It is only in lone statement that the relevance of family with salvation is suspected[1] But besides this solitary statement nowhere else the value of sex or family is denied. On the other hand there are several statements which confirm the importance of wife and sons[2]

The Upanishads are quite realistic in recognising both secular and social values. But axiological realism is not the final philosophy of Upanishads. Besides being realistic the Upanishads are also idealistic particularly in regard to values They do not recognise the values merely as they obtain in life. They also demand their transvaluation. Transvaluation of values is integra-

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1 किं प्रजया वा करिष्यामः । बृह० उप० ४-४-२२

2 बृह० उप० १-५-१६

बृह० उप० १-४-१०

tion of values with supreme spiritual value. Non-dualistic spirit is the supreme value according to the Upanishads It is the truth of truth (i.e. the highest truth) and the value of values All values are to be integrated with it In themselves most of the values, particularly secular values, are dualistic. Dualism makes for division and difference, and this mars the spiritual joy which is integral in its character This duality makes these values axiologically unreal They persist as facts of life but they cease to be values of life in the event of duality. It is in this axiological sense that the world and life are to understood as unreal and illusory But they acquire the dimension of reality by integration with non-dualistic and blissful spiritual reality. Such an integration is the principle of transvaluation of values according to the Upanishads All the secular and social values are to be integrated with spirit in order to acquire the real axiological dimension of divine delight.

The secular values particularly of foo,d wealth and intellect are naturally individualistic and so far unspiritual Spirituality arises only when the limit of strict individuality is transcended The social values, and sex among secular values, are not strictly individualistic They are potentially and partly spiritual. Social values transcend, by their very nature, individuality of secular values Secular values can be possessed and enjoyed in strict individuality. One can eat and possess wealth alone Natural determination of being tempts man to empasise individuality of these secular values Socio-economic conflicts originate in this instinct of monopoly about these secular values This individuality fosters egoism and selfishness and thus mars the spiritual possibilities of domestic relations also.

Some secular values like sex, speech and intellect are not confined within the natural limits of individuality They transcend the limits of individuality by their very nature They are mutual and not individual They are enjoyed only in intercourse with other persons Thus they imply a social dimension in their

very nature This sociality of these secular values, facilitates and also necessitates their spiritualization by securing delightful non-duality in their realization.

The social values are more evidently non-individual They are mutual and reciprocal They originate in sex and intellect which tend to transcend individuality. Purely human relations of man with man as man can be possible. But these can be possible only on a spiritual basis by transcending individuality by spiritual enlightenment of some degree. Any kind of concern with other creatures is transcending individuality and entering into the frontiers of spirituality. These purely human relations have been possible in society only after formation of society on domestic sexual relation Hardly any social relations could be possible before such a formation of society. The only form in which such relations could be imagined to exist in primitive times can be gathering of persons for collective venture of hunting wild animals

However purely human relations of a liberal and deeper kind have been possible only afttr the consolidation of society on the basis of domestic sexual situation Sex is a mutual enjoyment This mutuality of enjoyment is the secret and principle of its spirituality Sex is also a source of maternity. Maternity, though based on sex, extends towards non-sexual and super-sexual spirituality. Filial affections and tender emotion of parents are initial expressions of such spirituality. Fraternal affections are more non-sexual modes of it. Patriarchal, communal and royal relations are more distinctly cultural modes of spirituality expressing itself in social contexts These are definitely non-sexual and hence more evidently humanistic Friendly relations are most deeply spiritual due to an idea of equality which is highly conducive to spirituality.

Social relations of both kinds, those initially based on sexual relations and those which are evidently independent of them,

are partly and essentially spiritual in so far as they are obtained only in and by transcendence of individuality But as human relations, that is as relations cultivated by man, they are not naturally free from individualistic and egoistic limitations They obtain midway between individuality and spirituality We may call them a mixture or a confusion of individuality and spirituality In order to be made more and more spiritual they are to be freed more and more from the determinations of individuality and egoism. Such widening of spirituality of social relations is possible more easily in domestic and parental relations In these relations widening and deepening of spirituality is naturally facilitated, though this facilitation is to be availed of by cultural will In other relations no such facilitation is available Widening and deepening of spirituality is to be effected by stronger cultural will Humanity and spirituality of man expresses and realized itself more richly in such culturalization of life.

Widening and deepening of spiritual non-duality in human relations is the principle of transvaluation of social values according to the Upanishads Increasing and enduring delight is the concrete consequence and test of it Altruism and mutuality are the modes through which this non-duality can be widened and deepened Negatively it implies a transcendence of egoism, selfishness and intellectual arrogance.

The social values are initially and potentiality spiritual i e. non-dualistic and non-individualistic Hence the widening and deepening of spiritual non-duality in connection with them is conveniently possible, though it is difficult due to the determining influence of inveterate egoism and intellectualism of human nature Spirit is the super-natural in the sense that it transcends ego and individuality Thus spiritualization is a way of transcendence of natural being of man

Such spiritualization of relations is most easily possible in maternal and even paternal relations Motherhood is a natural

mode of altruism and spiritualism The mother identifies he existence with the well-being of her children. It is on accoun of this natural spirituality of the mother that the mother-cul came to be established in ancient society and it continues to in fluence people even today. There is a natural divinity abou the mother's love and benevolence. The mother represents th love and benevolence of God or divine being. The father also ca cultivate it. As motherhood is not given to males, love and bene volence are not natural to them Fathers seems to inherit th cruelty and egoism of the devil. Domestic life has mellowed thei barbarism considerably. Great moral and cultural endeavour o their part is needed by them for greater and deeper spiritualiza tion of their relations with children.

Fraternal and sororal relations have been elevated much i Indian culture A spiritualization of them needs transcendenc of egoistic rivalry between brothers and of sexual suscepti bilities between brother and sisters. Indian culture has the uni que privilege of making utmost efforts in this direction Patriar chal relations are likely to suffer from intellectual arrogance o the part of teachers and from intellectual jealousy on the par of pupils The Upanishadic pray for overcoming them and fo establishing spiritual accord between them. Spiritualization o social relations will prove that the basis of human love an relations is the transcendent spirit. Natural modes of body senses ego and intellect tend to obstruct spiritual intimacy in these re lations Only when they are transcended in spirit and are inte grated with it by subordination, can they subserve the cause o concrete spiritual love in human and social life. By spiritualiza tion of human relations the worldly life can become divine an the mundane earth can become the heaven of divine bliss an beatitude.

## CHAPTER XXVI

# ETHICAL VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

References to ethical values are widely scattered over in the Upanishads Ethical values are emphasised in the Upanishads as a necessary means for the realization of the spirit which, according to them, is the ultimate reality and also constitutes the final destiny of man Ethical values are recognised in the Upanishads even more strongly than tht social values Some of the ethical values like Shraddha find importance in the context of the patriarchal and parental relations But most of them like Tapas, Brahmacharya etc are prescribed as necessary means for spiritual realization. Thus ethics comes about to be rather subordinate and subsidiary to the spiritual metaphysics of the Upanishads Relation of ethics and metaphysics is a crucial problem of the Upanishadic Vedanta. Shankara regards ethics as subordinate and subsidiary to metaphysics. Ethical virtues internally constitute the character of a person, but externally they express in the personal and social conduct of man Conduct is an ethical mode of human activity. Action is temporal. It is a process in time. Thus it is entirely opposed to reality which is considered to be immutable and even immobile in order to affirm its transcendence of time and temporal process. Sccholars of Vedanta also, following Shankara, regard ethics as external to reality Along with Shankara, they do not treat it as integral to reality. It is not an integral cause of spiritual realization. It is only an external means to it. Hence moral conduct is not accepted as a cause which brings about spiritual realization as an effect

The Vedanta of the Upanishads, as represented by Shankara, is also believed to deny the reality of the world and the individual The world is unreal and individuality is an illusion They disappear with spiritual realization. With all its moral excellence ethical values are mundane in so far as they are expressed in

worldly conduct Individual is the person to whom these virtues belong They are the quality of his character and the content of his ethical being If the world is unreal and the individual is an illusion, no reality can be ascribed to morality and moral conduct.

The spiritual reality is also believed to be above good and evil Good and evil are relative to each other and the spirit is above the relativity of both The realized persons are above good and evil They are even accused of the likelihood of license

The pessimism of the Upanishads reflected in the idea of suffering and the fear of death is also understood to be antagonistic to any wholesome ethics Morality is a venture of goodness and hope Pessimism is an exaggeration of evil and depression. It also leads to devaluation of the individual who is glorified in ethics as the ideal custodian of morality and ethical virtues This pessimism is also reflected in the ascetic denial of Upanishadic sages and in an ethics of penance and self-mortification

Such a view of the Vedanta and of the place of ethics in it, does certainly reflect adversely upon an ethical approach to the Upanishads But such a view is a gross misrepresentation of the Upanishads It is fraught with grave misunderstandings about the real philosophy of the Upanishads The Upanishads are, in fact, neither so world-negating nor so pessimistic as they are represented to be. How realistically the secular values of food, sex etc are recognised in the Upanishads has been elaborately established in the foregoing chapters of this book The individuality of the moral agent and the relativity of good and evil are difficult and fundamental problems of Vedantic metaphysics, but the individual as the spiritual aspirant and also as the subject of moral virtues is distinctly recognised in the Upanishads In fact he is not so strictly individual as he is demanded to be even in an empirical or rational view of ethics The moral will which characterizes his being is not strictly individual. It obtains in the spiritual non-duality and only seems to function as an individual

prerogative The transcendence of good and evil in the Vedanta also does not imply a denial of the difference between good and evil. Evil is the negative and good is the positive constituent of the spiritual reality. Emphasis on its positive character involves transcendence of moral relativity. Suffering and death are bleak facts of life These cannot be ignored The Upanishads attend to them and try to overcome them They discover a spiritual panacea which can be remarkably helpful in reducing suffering and fear of death in life

Thus the Upanishads are not so unethical as they are represented to be. The importance which they attach to ethical values and moral virtues is a concrete evidence of the ethical disposition of the Upanishads Ample references to ethical virtues as a part of spiritual discipline are to be found in the Upanishads Moral qualification for spiritual realization is strongly emphasized it several places in the Upanishads The Mandukya and the Shwetashwatara Upanishads affirm the good as the integral character of spiritual reality [1] This repudiates the charge that the good is not integral to reality in the Vedanta Spiritual reality is represented as supreme being in the Upanishads The Sanskrit synonym for 'being' i e 'sat' signifies the 'good' as well. The Gita elucidates the moral significance of 'Sat' or being [2] Good is the positive content of being Bliss also is virtuous Virtue reflects in bliss both in inner experience and outer conduct. The Shantipatha of the Prashana Upanishad contains a prayer of the sages which expresses their deep concern with good They pray that they may hear good with their ears, see good with their eyes and that there may be good all around them [3] The Katha Upanishad makes a sharp distinction between good and the pleasant.

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1 शिवमद्वैतम् । मा० उप० ७
श्वे० उप० ४-१४, १६

2 गीता १७-२६

3 भद्र कर्णेभि शृणुयाम । प्रश्न० उप० शान्ति पाठ

It also affirms that wise persons prefer the good to the pleasant.[4] The Taittriya Upanishad understands the good as the dharma or the moral duty of man The good is the truth for it[5] It makes for virtues which constitute the integral character of the spirit.[6]

Good and virtue make for mental peace also which is the intrinsic character of spiritual being. The Vedas and the Upanishads contain prayers for peace. External peace is the consequence of inner peace which is the instrinsic character of spiritual being The Mandukya Upanishad defines spiritual reality as peaceful, besides being bood[7] Brahman, according to the Taittiriya Upanishad abounds in peace.[8] The Katha Upanishad also characterizes[9] and understands the spirit as peaceful.[10] Spiritual peace is not a reflection of inactivity but it is the core of good and reflects in bliss

Good is dynamic and volitional It characterizes will and expresses in conduct Good conduct is the expression of virtuous being One who 'does' good 'is' also good.[11] The supreme spirit, which is believed to be the supreme reality in the Upanishads, is not static and inactive It is dynamic[12] besides being peaceful and blissful It is not exhausted in action and thus transcends all duration, but it enrgises all action. It is

4 कठ उप० १-२-२

5 तै० उप० १-११

6 तै० उप० १-११

7 शान्त शिवं अद्वैतम् । मा० उप० ७

8 शान्ति समृद्धममृतन् । तै० उप १-६

9 कठ उप० १-३-१३

10 कठ उप० १-१-१७

11 साधुकारी साधुभर्वति । बृह० उप० ४-४-५

12 तदेजते । ईश० ५

infinitely intelligent but it is also volitional[13] It creates the world by its will[14] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad affirms that action is motivated by spiritual will[15] The self is described in the Chhandogya Upanishad as volitional[16] The Shwetashwatara Upanishad also understands Knowledge, Power and Action as the nature of spirit[17] As the spirit is non-dualistic in its character, its will is intrinsically good

The Isha Upanishad elucidates the principle of good as the expression of intrinsic non-duality or oneness of spirit, which characterizes the realization of reality.[18] One who perceives oneness of spirit does not hate any body.[19] He feels affiliation with or love for every one Hatred is due to a feeling of alienation caused by duality Hatred is the cause of all evil. We do wrong to a person only when we alienate from him and harbour hatred for him We cannot do wrong without hatred and alienation. Love is positive affiliation and identification with the interest of a person It inspires oneness of spirit and leaves no room for evil. Love is the principle of all good Good is spiritual as it is made possible by transcendence of duality and inculcation of non-duality which is the character of spirit

Spiritual oneness and love in which it expresses is the principle of good, as it is enunciated in the Isha Upanishad. The spiritual integration of modes of life and conduct according to it, as directed in the first two verses of Isha Upanishad, embodies the concrete form of good Good is an expression of spiritual

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13 स ईक्षत ।  ऐत० उप० १-३-१

14 सोऽकामयत ।  वहुस्या प्रजायेय ।  तै० उप० २-६

15 आत्मना हि कर्म करोति ।  वृह० उप० १-४-१७

16 क्रतुमय. पुरुष ।

17 स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानवल क्रिया च ।  श्वे० उप० ६-८

18 ईश० ६

19 एकत्वमनुपश्यन. ।  ईश० उप० ७

non-duality and oneness of spirit in the attitude and conduct of life The synthesis of being and good in the word 'Sat' signifies such a necessary correlation between spirituality and good.

The instructions of the sages to their disciples embody the ethics of the Upanishads which is also exemplified in the actual life and conduct of the sages The sages considered moral discipline and conduct as the only practical way for spiritual realization Hence they instructed their disciples to observe it Though the asceticism of the Upanishads is very moderate yet spiritual discipline necessarily implies some asceticism which is the only way to counteract the tempting delusions of sensual life. Hence an ascetic strain prevails in all the instructions given to disciples by sages Tapas or penance is foremost among the ethical virtues which disciples were required to observe for spiritual realization. Frequent instructions to observe Tapas or penance are found in the Upanishad The Isha Upanishad expects restraint and resignation in the secular enjoyments of life[20] This evidently implies an ascetic disposition in life The Kena Upanishad regards Tapas or penance and restraints of senses as important means of spiritual realization[21] The Katha Upanishad presents sensory pleasures of life as ephemeral and unsatisfying Tapas or penance is not directly preached in Katha Upanishad but it is implied in its attitude towards worldly possessions and pleasures. The Prashana Upanishad presents Tapas as the supreme principle of life which even the creator observes for the creation of the universe[22] Sage Pippalada instructs disciples to realize the spirit by Tapas or penance and Brahmacharya or celebacy.[23] Such a discipline leads to glory in life.[24] The Mundaka Upanishad affirms that the

20 तेन त्यक्तेन भुजीथा । ईश उप० १

21 तस्यै तपो दम कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा । केन उप० ४-८

22 प्रश्न उप० १-४

23 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया । प्रश्न उप० ४-३

24 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नो महिमानमनुभवति । प्रश्न उप० ५-३

supreme spiritual being expands itself by penance and creates the world[25] Brahmacharya is enjoined upon disciples by the Prashna Upanishad The Taittiriya Upanishad identifies Tapas as the nature of Brahman and regards Tapas as the means of its realization. Sage Varuna commands his son Bhrigu to realize Brahman by Tapas[27] Shwetashwarā Upanishads also cofirms Tapas as the supreme means of spiritual realization[28] Chhandogya Upanishad also gives priority to Tapas among virtues which constitute spiritual discipline according to it Sannyas or renuncia- is recommended and resorted to by sages in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.[29]

Brahmacharya is next to Tapas among the virtues to be observed for spiritual discipline Generally it is understood to signify celebacy But the Upanishads understand it as restraint in sexual life, particularly in regard to other women besides one's wife Sexual enjoyment with one's own wife also is desired to be restrained and regulated[30] The Katha, Prashna, Mundak, Chhandogya Upanishads prescribe Brahmacharya as an important means of spiritual realization.[31]

Shraddha or Faith is another prominent virtue required for spiritual discipline It is eminently spiritual as it implies profound regard for the preceptor, for elders, for truth and values. Faith is a moral virtue which shines on the spiritual horizons of life and serves as an effective schema of spirituality in cultural

25 तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म। मु० उप० १-१-८

26 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण। प्रश्न उप० १-२

27 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व। तै० उप० ३-२

28 श्वे उप० १-१५

29 बृह० उप० ४-४-२२

30 ब्रह्मचर्यमेव यद् रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यन्ते। प्रश्न उप० १-१३

31 कठ उप० १-१-७, प्रश्न उप० १-२, ५-३; मु० उप० १-२-११
छा० उप०

life. The Prashna, Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads particularly emphasise it The Briharanyaka sharply underlines its cordial and emotional character.[32]

Truth is a wide ethical value often emphasised in the Upanishads It is comprehensive in its character and may be implied in many virtues But generally it is understood as signifying intellectual honesty and integrity. Hence truth-speaking is the common form in which it is practically understood and observed. The Prashna, Mundaka, Taittiriya, Chhandogya Shwetashwatara etc emphasise truth as an important means of spiritual realization.

Peace is often emphasised as an important virtue in the Upanishads. It is not evidenly ethical as conative will is not obvious in it. But it is the basis of all virtues. It is implied in all virtues. It is not incoherent with moral conduct, but it is inconsistent with evil conduct as it is inspired with vile vigour. Peace prevails in the realm of moral conduct and spiritual discipline. The Shantipathas of Upanishads embody Vedic invocations of peace. The Upanishads emphasise it as the integral character of spirit and as an essential trait of moral and spiritual discipline[33]

These five can be regarded as cardinal virtues of Upanishads. Besides these, several other ethical values like obedience, dedication, ritual rectitude, silence, charity, sacrifice, etc are mentioned in the Upanishads

The ethics of the Upanishads is not merely theoretical. It is more practical It is propounded in the conntext of practical prescriptions to disciples for spiritual discipline. It is also practised by the sages and even by kings None of the sages are found to suffer from evils of anger or sexual obsession like some of the mythological sages of India Kings like Janaka and Ashwapati are seen to uphold high morality in their own conduct. The latter even boasts of the high morality of his peoples[34]

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32 हृदये ह्येव श्रद्धा प्रतिष्ठिता भवति । वृह० ३-९-२१
33 कठ उप० १-३-२४
34 छा० उप० ५-११-५

CHAPTER XXVII

# ETHICAL VALUES AND SPIRITUAL METAPHYSICS

Ethical values are the content of moral will and quality of moral conduct. Will and conduct are the cardinal modes of ethical values. Will belongs to a person who is regarded as the agent of moral conduct for whichhe is taken to be responsible. Moral responsibility implies moral freedom Moral freedom is the character of moral will Moral will is conative as it motivates moral conduct The person to whom it belongs is taken to be an individual Moral conduct as conative is a course in time

Thus individuality, conativity and volition are three main dimensions of ethical values, and of morality which embodies them Though the ethical values are emphasised in the Upanishad as a necessary means to spiritual realization, yet from the point of view of technical thought these characters of ethical values and morality are not consistent with the nature of spiritual reality which is the supreme truth of the Vedanta This technical inconsistency of ethics with Vedantic metaphysics creates a great problem for philosophical estimation of the Vedanta The supreme spirit of Vedanta is a metaphysical reality It is supremely transcendental and is thus beyond all empirical modes of existence and life It is beyond individuality and activity It is above the relativity, duality It is above the distinction of good and evil, which is fundamental to ethics It is one without a second,[1] no multiplicity of individuals can be possible in it Distinction of individuals also is necessary for expression in life. Moral conduct is action towards others An individual is agent of this action. The spirit is said to be

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1 एकमेवाद्वितीय ब्रह्म ।

above action It is taken to be 'achala' i.e. not moving. Movement and activity is the character of the world which is changing every moment. The spirit is permanent reality. It is unchanging, hence it is taken to be immobile and immutable.

Such spiritual reality does not seem to leave any place for moral conduct No moral values can be attributed to it It is attributeless Nor can such spiritual reality be attained by moral action. Moral action is inadequate to it. It is a process in time. All that is temporal is ephemeral. The permanent spiritual reality cannot be attained by ephemeral actions[2] It is to be realized by itself. All means are external to it. Thus there is a two-fold incoherence of action with spiritual reality. Firstly it does not belong to it, as it is above activity and time and change. Secondly it cannot be attained by action as it is inadequate to it. Thus it is difficult to reconcile ethical values with the spiritual reality of the Upanishadic Vedanta. The only way in which these can be reconciled is to seek light in some paradoxical statements of Upanishads and also in endeavouring to explore some new dimensions of activity, individuality, will good etc. which may not be so evidently incoherent with spiritual reality as are the empirical modes of these dimensions. We may even discover the spiritual basis of these dimensions in their empirical modes and find in this discovery also a ground for their reconciliation with transcendent spiritual reality.

Action as a process in time is the most crucial point for consideration of the reconciliation of ethical values with spiritual reality. Action is a dynamic mode existence It takes the form of conation in life, and becomes related to will as moral conduct Action as a process in time involves change of modes Even mere process in time implies change in position in the course of time. But besides this, time also effects change in modes of things.

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2 न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवम् तत् । कठ उप० १-२-१०

All things in time change Duration of things ends in their extinction, which means death for living beings Action in this sense and form does not and cannot belong to spiritual reality. But there are evidences in the texts of the Upanishads which indicate that dynamics is not entirely incoherent with and external to ultimate spiritual reality. The Isha Upanishad says that 'It (the ultimate spiritual reality) moves' though in the same breath it hastens to assert that, 'it does not move'[4] The denial of activity as belonging to spiritual reality is perhaps motivated by a fear lest the spiritual reality should be mistaken to be involved in and affected by movement like empirical beings and things. But it is also to be observed that the dynamic nature of spiritual reality is asserted first. It is not asserted first merely to be denied later It is mentioned first as it is deemed to be essential, intrinsic and integral nature of it But it is denied later simply to indicate that dynamics is not the total nature of spiritual reality. It is not exhausted in activity If it were so it would be modulating like empirical thilngs and would perish at tht end of a course A perishing reality is no reality at all It is merely a temporal phenomenon. Spiritual reality, though essentially dynamic, is also transcendent of activity Its dynamics is transcendental It is not to be measured in terms of empirical speeds Light has the highest speed in modes of being It is the highest approximation of empirical being to spiritual reality. Hence light is often used as a figure for spiritual reality as illuminating experience But the dynamics of spiritual reality is infinite and incalculable It is immediate and instantaneous as is suggested by the Biblical statements like 'let there be light and there was light'

The transcendental, immediate and incalculable dynamics of the spiritual reality is indicated by some statements of the Upa-

3 तदेजति । ईज० उप० ५

4 तन्न एजते । ईश० उप० ५

nishads The Isha Upanishad says that the spiritual reality is immobile, i e there is no locomotion in it, but it is faster than mind in movement it exceeds all moving things while remaining itself immobile that is uninvolved in movement.[5] The Katha Upanishad confirms the transcendental dialectic of the Isha Upanishad about the dynamics of spiritual reality. It says that the spiritual reality moves to great distances while remaining itself immobile e g. without involving itself in movement. It moves all around while remaining asleep i.e. without involving in the consciousness of movement.[6] Movement of living and intelligent beings is not only an involvement in motion but also implies consciousness of it Such consciousness is possible only in the waking state, sleep-walking is an abnormality which also is not entirely unconscious Consciousness is a mental activity which reflects the physical activity of movement. The statement of the Katha Upanishad suggests that the spiritual reality is superconscious It is intelligent but is above the temporal and dualistic consciousness Spiritual reality is of the nature of bliss which is integral immediate experience without dualistic consciousness which can mar it.

Similarly the dynamics of the spiritual reality is also transcendent, unlike, the calculable movement of empirical things. This spiritual dynamics is immediate and incalculable. Not only that it is not like empirical motion or movements, but it is the transcendent dynamics of the spiritual reality which motivates all the cosmic activities—the movement of elements and planets and of living beings The universes are created by its will and sustained by its immediate dynamics which is certainly one (but only one) dimension of ultimate spiritual reality.

We understand activity in conscious terms as a process in time implying involvement and mutation of things. The transcen-

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5 तद् धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठन् ।   ईश० उप० ४

6 आसीनो दूर व्रजति शयानो याति सर्वत ।   कठ० १-२-२१

dent dynamics of spiritual reality may be beyond our conscious comprehension. But it is an integral dimension of spiritual reality

In the same way a transcendent will also is asserted in the Upanishads as an integral dimension of reality Will is dynamic, conative and effective It expresses in conduct and creation Supreme Divine Being has created the universe by this all-powerful will[7] Cosmic will is ascribed to Him in the Upanishads and He is depicted as willing the creation Brahmasutras and Shankara in his commentary upon them have emphasised cosmic will as the point of distinction of the Vedanta from Sankhya which regards creation as a process which follows automatically from inanimate Prakriti[8] Such well ordered and minutely purposive creation cannot be automatic It is the expression of intelligent cosmic creative will which is clearly recognised in the Upanishad Will is dynamic and ethical Cosmic creative will also confirms the dynamic character of supreme spiritual reality The will of Divinity is Good, though the divine good is absolute and not relative The evil in creation is incidental and relative

That the Divine Will as good is suggested by the word 'Sat' which signifies both Being and Goodness. The integrity of being and goodness permeates the texture and spirit of language 'Sat' is commonly used as an attributive which signifies the goodness of nouns to which it is prefixed e g sajjan, sadguna etc 'Sat' signifies ultimate reality which is regarded as ultimate being but also as ultimate good Brahman is a term which is used for reality, which is excessive and not exhaustive, as the etymology of the term Brahman signifies Realization of Brahman or supreme spiritual reality is considered to be the ultimate goal of human life This realization is called liberation, as it implies freedom from all determinations of natural life But it is also called

7 स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा। ऐत० उप० १-१-१

8 ईक्षतेर्नाशब्दम्।

Nishreyas or the Highest good This means that Supreme Spiritual Reality is also supreme good according to the Vedanta. It is. of course, not relative but absolute good.

Besides the implication of goodness in the etymology of 'Sat' there are definite statements in the Upanishads which characterize the supreme spiritual reality as good. Good is integral to ultimate Being The Mandukya Upanishad describes supreme spiritual reality as peaceful and good.[9] The Shwetashwatara Upanishad also designates it as good (Shivam) in several verses[10] The Katha Upanishad insists on a distinction between the good and the pleasant and expects wisemen to choose the good.[11] It evidently intends the good to be the integral character of reality.

Spiritual reality is absolute good and not relative good. It is untouched with evil[12] One who realizes it also becomes free from all evil Evil is incidental in creation It follows from duality with which the world is fraught All evil is due to alienation and hatred which results from duality. When one perceives spiritual oneness with all, he hates none and does no evil.[13] Supreme spiritual reality is non-dualistic and transcends duality. Hence it is free from evil.

The divine good-will is not deliberative but is spontaneously good One who realizes spiritual reality also attains spontaneous good-will from which good emanates like light from sun or like fragrance from a flower. The Divine Dynamics also is free from the determinate dynamics of the natural world. It isa free or

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9 शान्त शिवम् । मा० उप० ७

10 श्वे० उप० उप० ४-१४

11 कठ उप० १-२-२

12 आत्माऽपहतपाप्मा ।

13 ततो न विजुगुप्सते । ईश उप० ६

spontaneous dynamics Hence it is described as lila or sport of the Spirit Determinate dynamics is devoid of delight Delight expresses in freedom Divine dynamics in the form of lila is delightful as suggested in the Brahma Sutra[14] and as adumbrated in the Shaiva and Vaishnava cosmologies

Thus ethical values are integral to the being of supreme spiritual reality which is endowed with divine dynamics and divine will These values as they belong to the spiritual reality are absolute and not relative They are found in it in infinite and absolute form As Ramanuja has repeatedly emphasised in his commentaries, spiritual reality is the ocean of all auspicious virtues[15] The nature of spiritual reality as described above on the basis of Upanishadic texts is not antagonistic to ethical values but is supremely coherent with them

Besides will and goodness, altruism is the essence of ethical values Good comprehends the individual self of the moral agent also, but it mainly consists in the happiness and welfare of others Hence good is essentially above ego Egoism and selfishness leads to conflict, and causes evil. Good appears in life only when ego is transcended and interests are identified with others Egoism is rooted in individuality and duality Good is the virtue of non-duality. Non-duality is the character of spirit. Spirit integrates good in its nature by virtue of non-duality. Ego is transcended in non-duality and altruism becomes a simple consequence of this transcendence Thus altruistic good is the Spontaneous expression of the non-dualistic nature of spiritual reality. Creation with such abundant treasures is an example of intrinsic altruism of divine being

Individuality is the crux of ethics Moral conduct is understood to be act of an individual who is treated as a moral agent.

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14 लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम् ।

15 असख्येयकल्याणगुणगणमहोदधि· ।

Individuality leads to duality and diversity. Good is an other-regarding deed which an individual agent does for other person: Thus individuality is considered to be essential for ethics. Eth: cal values belong as virtues to moral individuals. Individuallit makes for duality and spiritual reality is non-dualistic Henc individuality and ethics are not coherent with the reality. Bu this view is based on a misconception about individuality. Stric individualism leads to egoism and selfishness. No altruism an ethics is possible with it. Transcendence of ego is necessary fo doing good. Ethical virtues appear only when one identifies hi being with others. The individual remains, no doubt, the appa rent agent of good, but in reality it is by his non-dualistic bein that he performs good and attains virtues. Ethical values are in termediate schema between natural individualism and spiritua non-dualism which foster concrete modes of the latter in life an excellence of which approximates with the realization of spiri tual reality and forms a bridge to the transcendental realm o spirit

Individuality in man is akin to uniqueness (advitiya) o Spiritual Reality. The core of individuality is spiritual unique ness which is integrated in personality by non-duality of huma attitudes and relations The phenomenon of individuality is sup ported by spiritual uniqueness and non-duality Without livin non-duality of domestic love the indivihuality of a child is no cultivated properly. Utter lack of non-dualistic love is a majo cause of insanity and loss of individuality. The crux of indivi duality is spiritual non-duality. Individuality as ethical agent ship is more spiritual as morality and moral virtues imply more non-duality in the form of altruism. Hence in its deepest form individuality is not incoherent with spiritual reality and ap pears to be intimately related to it. The dualistic reflections of individuality are only auxiliary empirical modes of it which also are supported by non-dualistic spiritual reality.

With such kinship of the ethical concepts of individuality conation and will with Spiritual Reality the accord of ethica

values with Reality becomes understandable The ultimate state of this accord can be realized only in the state of ultimate spiritual experience It cannot be argued and explained according to the standards of empirical knowledge and reasoning The explanations adduced above are intended only to indicate the reasonableness of this accord.

Morality as the quality of man's character and conduct can thus be reasonably understood as being akin to Spiritual Reality. The value of moral effort in spiritual realization also can be understood in a similar manner There is an apparent discord between Reality and moral action This discord reveals the difficulty of relating moral effort to spiritual realization Shankara has keenly recognised and emphatically asserted this difficulty In his introduction to Gita he has candidly rejected the idea of relation of moral effort with spiritual realization. The origins of this view are to be found in the Upanishadic statements which indicate the incoherence of ephemeral acts with eternity of of reality[17] It is only with the dynamic dimension of reality[18] and altruistic spirituality of moral acts that moral effort can be related to spiritual realization The relation of moral effort and spiritual realization can be figuratively likened to the relation of heat and fire As heat culminates in a flame, so also moral effort culminates in a spiritual realization There must undoubtedly be a leap in it all But that leap is supported by the spirit which metaphysically underlies everything There are many such leaps in life. Moral effort makes the ground for leaps and its highest value consists in this

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16 गीता भाष्य भूमिका ।

17 नास्त्यकृत कृतेन । मु० १-२-१२
न ह्यध्रुवै प्राप्यते हि ध्रुव तत् । कठ १-२-१०

18 तदेजति । ईश० उप० ५

But moral values not disregarded in spiritual realization. They are transcended in it but they are retained in essence. The realized become above good and evil, but they do not acquire a license thereby. What is a difficult deliberation before realization becomes a spontaneous expression of the spiritual being on man after realization He emanates good, without possibility of any evil, even as a flower emanates fragrance os as sun and moon express their light.[19]



19 नैष्कर्म्य सिद्धि. ।

## CHAPTER XXVIII

# CARDINAL VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

Virtues are concrete modes of ethical values They characterize the being of man and express in his conduct They are not ontological in the metaphysical sense but they are operative constituents of the moral being of man They are dynamic qualities of personality and character, they are always disposed to express in practical conduct of life Virtues function as links and liason between the metaphysical spiritual being of man and the requirements of his empirical and social life They are the schema between spiritual being and active life They incorporate in their character spiritual content in empirical mode They are spiritual in their altruistic character, how much so ever difficult it may to be understand the modal operatios of ethical virtues in empirical life.

All virtues are spiritual as they are all essentially altruistic They embody the good of others in their very nature, though they also constitute the good of the virtuous person in their being The good of the person accrues from and becomes indentified with the good of others Besides altruism the non-duality of virtues also indicates and affirms their spirituality Specific virtues are limited in their ethical character and scope General virtues are wider in being and scope. Some general virtues have been considered to be cardinal in the history of ethical thought Justice, benevolence etc were regarded as cardinal virtues in Greek ethics They are cardinal in the sense that they are fundamental to all ethical life and cons titute the basis of other virtues which can be treated as specific modes of cardinal virtues

No fundamental virtues have been distinguished and emphasized as cardinal virtues in the ethics of the Upanishads or in

Indian ethics in general But they can be marked out on the basis of the ethical importance they bear in their character. This importance has often been highlighted by the emphasis on their ethical significance and spiritual value often found in the Upanishads. The general and fundamental character of these values affords them a cardinal character on the basis of which they can be treated as cardinal virtues of the Upanishadic ethics.

Truth, Reverence, Brahmacharya or celebacy and Tapas or ascetic austerity can be noted as cardinal virtues of the Upanishads Truth, like Justice of the Greek ethics, can be understood to be Supreme and more fundamental among four cardinal virtues Truth is a term of wide significance and meaning. It incorporates in its character metaphysical, moral and logical dimensions This complexity of Truth follows from a lack of linguistic distinction in the metaphysical and logic dimensions of truth as is borne out by the distinct usage (at least in philosophy) of two terms Truth and Reality in English language. The implication of both ontological essence and ethical significance in the etymological root (sat) of Truth (Satya) is the original cause of this complexity. The ultimate source of this complexity lies in the Indian view of life and philosophy which believes the ultimate metaphysical reality to be also the source of all good, and which understands morality as constituting the being of man Though the ethical being of man expresses is moral conduct, it is transcendent of all actions. It is being in itself

The spiritual and metaphysical character of Truth makes it wide in its scope, and also makes it the source of other cardinal and specific virtues Metaphysically Truth is the Supreme spiritual reality which is called Brahman in the Upanishads It is the abundant and blissful reality The Transcendent Delight of Brahman is the Sustenance and destiny of man It also supports the moral will by its dynamic dimension It is the Truth or the

Truth of Truth i e the Supreme Truth and the support of all other modes of Truth and virtue The spirituality of reality consists in the openness, simplicity and sincerity of spirit These characters of spirit align reality to other modes of truth i e moral, oral etc. This simplicity and openness of spiritual veracity is exemplified in the story of Satyakama[1] The Prashna Upanishad has also indicated the rectitude and uncrookedness of Truth,[2] which have been explained as simplicity by Shankara in his commentary.[3] The conduct of sages and disciples in the Upanishads is so simple and unreserved that it seems to be the embodiment of truth Crookedness or falsity occurs in the incoherence of thought, speech and action. Shankara explains truth as coherence and integrity of these.[4] This integrity brings the truth of thought to moral conduct All virtues follow from Truth understood in such wide sense

Truth speaking is a common and well-known form of ethical integrity It has been duly emphasised in the Upanishads Emphatic instruction for speaking truth is found in the convocation address contained in the Taittiriya Upanishad Exhortation to speak truth is the first among other moral instructions in this convocation[5] This shows the primacy and supremacy of Truth speaking in the ethical tradition of India King Harishchandra, Yudhisthira etc have become symbols of Truth-Speaking in the

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1 छान्दोग्य उप० ४-४-५

2 न तेषु जिह्ममनृतम् ।   प्रश्न उप० १-१६

3 सत्यमिति अमायिता अकौटिल्यम् ।   प्रश्न उप० शा० भा० १-१६

4 सत्यमिति अमायिता अकौटिल्य वाङ्मन कायानाम् ।
प्रश्न उप० शा० भा० १-१६

5 सत्यं वद धर्म चर ।   तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

mythological history of India Mahatma Gandhi also made truth the cardinal tenet of his teachings. Following him the Government of India have adopted Truth as a national motto. The motto has been adopted from the Upanishadic text[6] Both Gandhi and the Government intend Truth in a wide and comprehensive sense.

Truth in the wider sense is identical with Spiritual reality in the Upanishads[7] As no external means are adequate for the attainment of spiritual reality, Truth is also the means for attaining Spiritual reality as the destiny of life[8] Thus truth is recognised in the Upanishads both as a cardinal virtue which is fundamental to moral life and also as metaphysical reality which supports life and which, through its revelation in life, can also work as a means of attaining spiritual reality as the destiny of life

All other specific virtues follow from the ethico-metaphysical idea of Truth. Reverence is foremost among these virtues in which truth finds a concrete expression in human conduct. Shraddha is understood in the Upanishad as an emotive attitude of regard and reverence It is not un-intellectual as regard and appreciation assume an axiological understanding of values. But it is not mere intellectual recognition of them. It is a feelingful regard for values and persons who embody them Shraddha also contains an idea of Sanctity about values As Truth is raised to metaphysical altitudes, Shraddha in Indian tradition, is equally a religious and moral virtue It is equally directed toward gods and venerable persons The Guru or the teacher comes between the two As an emotional attitude it incorporates love also besides regard, and reverence. Thus it takes the form of religious

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6 सत्यमेव जयते । मु० उप० ३-१-६

7 ब्रह्म सत्यम् । बृह० उप० ५-५-१

8 सत्येन लभ्य तपसा । मु० उप० ३-१-५

devotion in Bhakti Schools Emotion dominates in devotion, while regard dominates in Shraddha or reverence.

Tulsidas in his 'Ramcharitamanas' has identified Shraddha as the spiritual power of divinity[9] As spiritual it is transcendent and as power it is dynamic It transcendents ego and intellect Its spirituality is expressed in this transcendence As dynamic it motivates moral and spiritual conduct of man The regard and reverence which are signified by Shraddha, come from transcendence of ego and intellect We can have real regard for values and persons only when we transcend the limits of ego Our existence is elevated by this regard in a deeper sense, but in a narrower sense of ego is transcended in reverence

The importance of reverence is definitely asserted at several places in the Upanishads The Katha and Prashna Upanishads refer to reverence as a quality of character and discipline.[10] So also does the Mundaka Upanishad[11] The Taittiriya Upanishad reveals the depths of reverence when it advises charitable persons to be regardful even in charity.[12] The Upanishadic recognition of Shraddha finds its culmination in the statement of the Gita in which it identifies Shraddha with the being of man and asserts that reverence leads to attainment of values and to approximation of being with them[13]

Brahmacharya can be regarded as the third cardinal virtue of Upanishadic ethics It is correlated with Truth and Reverence Truth in its wider sense is identical with supreme spiritual

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9 भवानीशंकरौ वन्दे श्रद्धाविश्वासरूपिणौ ।

10 कठ उप० १-१-१३, प्रश्न उप० १-२

11 मु० उप० १-२-१२

12 श्रद्धया देयम् अश्रद्धया अदेयम् । तै० उप० १-११

13 यो यच्छ्रद्ध स एव स । गीता १७-३

reality. Observance of truth means not merely verbal veracity but it signifies integrity of conduct which is based on integrity of metaphysical reality and moral values Reverence is a disposition of emotional regard for spiritual reality and other values which follow from it Brahmacharya is generally understood in a narrow sense of celebacy, which is a self-contradictory idea, as it cannot be conceived without inovlving its violation. The Upanishads also understand it in sexual context, though they do not take it to mean strict celebacy. Celebacy is complete abstenance from sexual ideation and indulgence. The Upanishads are liberal in their sexual limitation of Brahmacharya. They define it as moderate sexual life limited by a socio-ethical regulation of marriage According to the Upanishads sexual intercourse during night and with one's own wife is tentamount to Brahmacharya.[14] The Upanishads do not explain the spiritual implication of this sexual moderation, they confine the concept to sexual context

The etymological and real significance of Brahmacharya is not confined to sex It is wider. Brahman is the Supreme Spiritual reality and Brahmacharya should mean such attitude and conduct as is in accordance with the nature of Brahman As Brahman is good,[15] Brahmacharya includes all good conduct in its concept, and excludes all evil from it Sexual license is an evil and is eliminated from it But Brahmacharya in its real sense is not mere negative abstenance from sex but positive disposition of virtue, love, service etc. Without this wider and positive dispositon abstenance from sex or even moderation in sex is neither possible, nor will it imply moral virtue and spiritual excellence

The Upanishads regard Brahmacharya as an important part of spiritual discipline Its importance for spiritual realization has been emphasised at several places in

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14 रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यन्ते तद् ब्रह्मचर्यमेव । प्रश्न उप० १-१३

15 शान्तं शिवम् । मा० उप० ६

Katha, Prashna and Mundaka Upanishads[16] The Chhandogya Upanishad refers to the celebatic discipline of Indra[17] The aspirants lived a celebate life in the forest hermitages and celebacy was regarded as a necessary part of discipline required for spiritual realization

Tapas or penance can be considered as the fourth cardinal virtue. It is cardinal as it is fundamental like Truth, Reverence and Brahmacharya It has been greatly emphasised in the Upanishads as a necessary mode of spiritual discipline It has not been clearly defined and explained in the Upanishads, but it is evidently an ascetic virtue It is akin to Brahmacharya in asceticism but it is wider than the former Brahmacharya signifies abstenance only from sexual indulgence, bnt Tapas or penance requires abstenance from all sensory life It involves withdrawal from all sensory pleasures Thus it is anti-hedonistic Sensory indulgence is pleasant but good is to be distinguished from it[18] Pleasures wear the energy of senses[19] Restraint of senses leads to conservation of energy The spirituality of sensory withdrawal and asceticism reveals and releases the spiritual energy of man This energy can serve for great creative achievements It is a great attainment and delight in itself As withdrawal from the extrovert life of senses, Tapas or penance is the main method and way of spiritual realization, and it has been emphasised in the Upanishads as such

It is regarded as a divine virtue and references are made to it as creative power of divinity The Prashna Upanishad

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16 कठ उप० १-२-१५
  प्रश्न० उप० १-१०, १-२, ५-३
  मु० उप० ३-१-६, ८-१०, ८-१०-४

17 छा० उप० ८-९-३

18 अन्सच्छ्रेय. अन्यदुतैव प्रेय । कठ उप० १-२-१

19 इन्द्रियाणा जरयन्ति तेज - कठ० उप० १-१-२६

refers to the penance of Prajapati, the original Creator, and affirms that he created the copular universe by penance.[20] The Mundaka Upanishad maintains that the spiritual energy of Brahman attains excellence by penance and becomes creative[21] Aspirants who observe penance also attain excellence of spiritual energy thereby Truth, Reverence and Brahmacharya form the foundation of penance One who possesses the accomplishment of these virtues experiences excellence of spiritual being[22] The Mundaka, Taittiriya, and Shwetashwatara Upanishads confirm the importance of penance as a cardinal method of spiritual discipline[23] The Taittiriya Upanishad identifies penance with Brahman or supreme spirit and thus more evidently confirms the spirituality of penance[24]

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20 तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयति । प्रश्न उप० १-४

21 तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म । प्रश्न उप० १-८

22 स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नो महिमानमनुभवति ।
प्रश्न उप० ५-३

23 मु० उप० १-२-११
तैत्तिरीय उप० ३-२
श्वे० उप० ६-२१

24 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । तै० उप० ३-२

CHAPTER XXIX

# ASCETIC VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are the records of the esoteric spiritual teachings which the ancient sages of India imparted to their disciples at the close confidential sessions which were held at their forest hermitages Hence it is natural for them to be ascetic in their attitude towards empirical life This ascetic attitude was a natural implication of their mode of living and of their view of life both of which reflected in their teachings The life of the sages was normal in the sense that most of them lives a married life with their wives But it was economically austere and it inclined towards asceticism from the point of view of mental disposition towards sensory pleasures In fact their mental attitude and teachings are more ascetic than their actual living They seem to be duly interested in wealth and sex, though they are not in the least inclined towards indulgence in them They accepted gifts from kings, but they never covetted wealth They affirmed the propriety of mating with one's wife, but they insisted on regulation and restriction of sex

Asceticism is an attitude of forbearance and austerity in regard to sensory life In its extreme form it amounts to mortification of flesh Such extreme forms of asceticsm have prevailed in several schools of Indian philosophy among which Yoga and Jainism are notable But the attitude of the Upanishadic sages and of many schools of philosophy and religion has been moderately ascetic Such has been the attitude of Indian people in general It is inclined towards forbearance, austerity and restriction of sensory pleasures Generally it has never been inclined towards hedonism or sensualism

Such moderate asceticism is the general tone of the Upanishads But the Upanishadic attitude becomes more strongly asc-

tic in the context of spiritual discipline than it is towards general life The convocation address found in the Taittiriya Upanishad does not demand any austerity or asceticism from the disciples who are entering domestic life after completion of their studies and spiritual training. The preceptor asks them to speak the truth and to observe moral righteousness in their conduct[1] He appeals to them to marry and earn wealth.[2] But the young disciples who come for training to forest hermitages are required to observe a deeper austerity and asceticism than is demanded of a householder They are generally asked to observe Tapas or penance which was considered to be the Supreme mode of spiritual realizaton They were also instructed to observe other ascetic virtues and disciplines like renunciation, restraint of senses, mendicancy, celebacy etc All these implied asceticism in some form and degree

Asceticism is the opposite of hedonism and sensualism. The latter involve indulgence in sensory pleasures, while asceticism implies forbearance and denial of them Asceticism is the essence of Tapas or penance which is considered to be the supreme method of spiritual realization Spirit is metaphysically the transcendent and blissful Reality which is four-dimensional in its character, according to the Mandukya Upanishad[3] The waking world and life of objects and activities operating in time is comcomprehended into it as one dimension of Reality.[4] But it is not whole of it Reality is not exhausted in it The core of reality consists in transcendance, while comprehending world, objects, life, activities etc it transcends them Transcendence is

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1 सत्यं वद धर्मं चर । तै० उप० १-११

2 प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सी । तै० उप० १-११

3 सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् । मां० उप० २

4 जागरितस्थान प्रथम पाद । मा० उप० ३

higher truth of Reality The one-dimensional duration has no possibility of sensation and knowledge of pleasure or pain. Sensation and knowledge form a second dimension of existence and reality Comprehension or order forms the third dimension But all these dimensions are adequate and exhaustive They have no element of excess in them They are fraught with immanence and with effects of all the relative feelings of pleasure and pain They are also dualistic as they involve a duality of subject and object. There is no integrality or transcendence in them. Spiritual bliss is not relative, transitory or dualistic like sensory pleasure It is akin to pleasure but is different from it in quality in for as it transcends suffering pain, fear, duality, time etc It is pure positive delight of spirit the essence of which consists in it transcendental character

As spiritual bliss, which is the destiny of life consists in transcendence, it is to be attained by and in transcendence of empirical limitations Asceticism is the discipline of austerity and renunciation which emphasises transcendence of empirical limitations, as if by vengeance

Tapas or penance signifies a devoted and determined concentration and attention towards the spiritual goal It involves withdrawal from all worldly and sensory pleasures and is in this respect anti-hedonistic. Its external modes also involve voluntary courting of pain and suffering in addition to abstenance from pleasures Penance of Parvati in icy streams in winter and with fires all around in summer is an example of antihedonistic attitudes involved in Tapas, sitting in one posture for a long time and concentrating on the spiritual goal is the common form of it Taking pains and enduring hardships for our kins and friends is a common kind of Tapas observable in daily life. The woman's sacrifice and suffering for the husband and children also is a sort of domestic Tapas, which according to Tulsidas is sufficient for bringing about her salvation[5] Cultural and socio-

political achievements also involve sufferings and sacrifices which make endeavours for these achievements tentamount to Tapas This is an extension of the traditional meaning of Tapas which is not unwarranted in view of the real intention of it. But in the Upanishads it is understood strictly in the context of spiri tual aspiration

Tapas involves withdrawal from sensory activities and an inward exihileration of spiritual energies Thus it leads to enhancement of power The Primeval Being (Prajapati) is said to have created the universe by such enhancement of energy by Tapas Sages also could perform miracles by it Vishwamitra is believed to have created a new Heaven for King Trishanku by his Tapas A person who acquires the spiritual wealth of Tapas realizes excellence and glory in life[7]

The Upanishads affirm at numerous places the importance and efficacy of Tapas for attaining spiritual goal of life Several preceptors ask their disciples to observe Tapas for Spiritual realization Varuna asks his son Bhrigu to know Brahman by Tapas[8] The Shwetashwatara, Mundaka, Prashna, Kena Upanisnad affirm the efficacy of Tapas for spiritual attainment The Taittiriya Upanishad identifies Tapas with Brahman[9] and suggests the spiritual character of Tapas or penance

Brahmacharya or celebacy is a cardinal form of Tapas or penance which for its importance has been separately empha-

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5 विनु श्रम नारि परमगति लहही । अरण्यकाण्ड दोहा ४

6 प्रजापति स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयते ।
प्रश्न उप० १-४

7 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नौ महिमानमनुभवति । प्रश्न उप० ५-३

8 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तै० उप० ३-३-२

9 तपो ब्रह्मेति । तै० उप० ३-३-२

sised in the Upanishads Brahmacharya is its wider sense of spiritual attitude to life implies all kinds of Tapas in it, but in its narrower sense of celebacy, it is a kind of Tapas which deserves a distinct emphasis due to the dominance of sex in life and consequent importance of celebacy in spiritual discipline As sex is a most pleasant function of life,[10] and its control is most difficult, celebacy is a supreme kind of Tapas Many penancing sages are reported in Indian mythology to have been enticed away from their penance into sensual indulgence by celestial nymphs Sex is the most seductive temptation and it is most difficult to resist and to overcome The religions which ordained compulsory celebacy for their priests failed in their real intention and their ordinance was only apparently observed But the fascination of and indulgence in sex is the greatest hindrance in spiritual quest Extreme ascetics tries to completely overcome it and to abstain from it absolutely Some reacted to this extreme asceticism by perverse indulgence and sought salvation through it The Upanishads take a moderate view of Brahmacharya and understand it as regulated and restricted enjoyment of sex with one's own wife[11] Such a compromise is not only practicable but also contributive to spiritual salvation The positive kinship of sex with spirit in regard to delight needs to be appreciated in this context Such moderate enjoyment of sex can help for its transcendence through conjugal love tentamount to celebacy in respect to other women Conjugal love can regulate the wildness and violence of sex and make it subservient to spiritual discipline

The affirmation of Brahmacharya as a Supreme mode of spiritual discipline is to be found in the Katha, Prashna, Mundaka, Chhandogya Upanishads It is often mentioned along with Tapas to which it is so akin and of which it forms a cardinal mode

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10 सर्वेपा ग्रानन्दानामुपस्य एकायनम् । बृह० उप० २-४-११

11 रात्रौ रत्या सयुज्यन्ते तद् ब्रह्मचर्यमेव । प्रश्न उप० १-१३

Tapas and Brahmacharya involve a withdrawal from sensory pleasures But the senses a likened to wild horses by the Katha Upanishad and it is a difficult task to control them[12] The sensory objects draw away the senses as the wind draws away the boat in deep water, and the mind follows the senses[13] The Upanishads prescribe the way of renunciation, and of repression of senses (dama) for Tapas and Brahmacharya. Renunciation is a mental disposition of withdrawal of senses from objects, and repression is a physical effort to restrain senses when they seem to be tempted away by sensory objects Renunciation is implied in the general attitude of the sages towards life. The simple and austere life which they lived in forest hermitages was verily a life of renunciation in comparison to moderate secular life of citizens The climate and conditions of that life implied austerity and abstenance which bordered on renunciation They observed penance and sexual continence for spiritual realization But they have also expressely prescribed penance and sexual continence for spiritual realization But they have also expressly prescribed penance and celebacy for their disciples and have urged upon them to observe renunciation of sensory pleasures and restraint of senses as auxilary means of it The most prominent injunction for renunciation is to be found in the very first verse of the Isha Upanishad, in which it enjoins upon men to enjoy secular objects with utmost forbearance and in a spirit of renunciation[14] It also urges upon men not be greedy about wealth and possessions,[15] as they are not integral ingradients of man being

Nachiketas, in the Katha Upanishad, also indicates the limitations of wealth and worldly pleasures and his view reflects a

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12 तम्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथे· ।  क० उप० १-३-५

13 गीता ७-६-७

14 तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा· ।  ईश उप० १

15 मा गृध ।  ईश उप० १

spirit of renunciation[16] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad urges a renunciation of the three main cravings of man i.e. for progeny, for wealth and for paradise and enjoins upon seekers of spirit to resort to a life of mendicant[17] The Mundaka Upanishad also ordains mendicancy[18] Mendicancy was prevalent in India as a practical and concrete mode of a life of renunciation A mendicant owned no possessions and lived on daily alms. Sannyana was recommended for all as a final means of salvation

Renunciation was recommended as a practical mode of transcending the duality and determination of sensory objects The essence of it consisted in an attitude of real detachment from objects Restraint or repression of senses was urged for keeping under control by force when they seemed to become violent under passions of anger, greed, sex etc This forceful method was never considered to be important but it was deemed to be necessary when inner methods of control were not effectively cultivated Both renunciation and restraint were considered to be conducive to detachment from sensory attractions They were expected to be effective against the natural infatuation of man's mind with sensory objects and sensory pleasures The vision of spiritual non-duality is the deeper secret of all these ascetic virtues which are deemed to be conducive to spiritual realization The Isha Upanishad reveals this spiritual secret of ascetic discipline in the context of infatuation.[19] But it is applicable to all ascetic virtues. Ascetic disposition involves a detachment and withdrawal from sensory pleasures It is not possible merely by external observances An

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16 कठ उप० १-१-२६, २७, २८

17 वृह० उप० ३-५-१

18 भैक्ष्यचर्या चरन्त । मुं० उप० १-२-११

19 ईश उप० ७

inner motivation is needed to cultivate detachment and withdrawal as an effective disposition. It is the inward accord of detachment with spiritual delight that alone can serve as a bridge to connect common life with spiritual enlightenment Asceticism is the essence of spirituality. Positive ethical virtues and social modes of spiritual love also cannot be attained and social modes of spiritual love also cannot be attained and observed without incorporating effective asceticism with one's disposition and conduct.



## CHAPTER XXX

# PACIFIC VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

Ascetic virtues are an assurance for progress towards transcendent spiritual experience which is the ultimate goal of life according to the Upanishads Asceticism marks withdrawal from identification of existence with sensory and natural life. Such life is one-dimensional It is dominated by natural determinism of senses and is identical with instinct and duration It operates in one-dimension of time. Asceticism implies a challenge to and a transcendence of this one-dimensional life. The challenge is in the form of restraint and withdrawal of senses from their objects. The transcendence of one dimensional life, made possible with the help of the above challenge, is effected in overcoming of duration and time It introduces peace as the opposite dimention of duration and reveals the enduring spiritual delight in the apparent vacancy of sensory content of life The dimension of delight as transcendent, is independent of duration and objective association, but as immanent it can also be concurrent with empirical life. In the immanent form also it characterizes empirical life with calm, peace, moderation and delightfulness.

What can be described as pacific virtues are thus deeply spiritual and closely related to ascetic virtues Asceticism as a discipline contains some enforcement of denial of pleasure and is more negative in this sense The positive outcome of ascetic discipline should be in the form of what can be described as pacific virtues. Brahman itself is of the nature of peace[1] It is so by virtue of transcendence of duration which constitutes its deeper

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1 उपशान्तोऽयमात्मा । शान्तं शिव अद्वैतं । मां० उप० ६

truth The pacific virtues are thus more akin to spiritual reality and are also more closely conducive to its attainment

We find occasional references to these pacific virtues in the Upanishads But these rare references are of great importance in understanding the core of Upanishadic spiritualism and the moral discipline needed for spiritual realization Pacific virtues are more spiritual than ethical They are not so much dynamic as to have an evident basis of moral will They seem to be inactive virtues Hence they may also appear to be negative. The positive character of moral virtues consists in the dynamics of will and motivation of conduct by it. But in fact they are not negative. They are not achieved in the state of ascetic struggle for conquest of sensory temptations, but they are acquired after the triumph of ascetic struggle. The negative strain of asceticism is completely overcome in the acquisition of these virtues. They are not obviously and directly active, but their transcendental dynamics operates with subtlety and keeps all activity calm and controlled. The transcendent spiritual dimension of these pacific virtues maintains calm in activity and controls the durational determinism of all activity. This character of pacific virtues is the core of human culture and etiquette, and is deeply conductive to spiritual realization.

Pacific virtues are to be distinguished from the apparently negative and strenuous ascetic virtues on one side and from more obvious dynamic virtues on the other. They are also to be distinguished from social virtues Pacific virtues bestow their grace to social conduct, but in themselves they form the intrinsic character of the personality of a man. They are the highest personal excellences of man. Foremost among them is peace itself. Other pacific virtues derive their cardinal nature from peace and are more like its modes in various contexts of human conduct. Peace is the opposite of activity or more correctly of anxiety which is created by it. All activity creates anxiety and unrest in life because man cannot float on the stream of duration like a

log of wood. Man's life is not entirely one-dimensional. It is not purely durational like that of moving planets or streams It is interfered by a second dimension of limitation operating in the form of consciousness, cognition and will A third dimension of comprehension is also implied in human life. The difficulty of acquiring the second and third dimensions and of adequate adjustment of impassioned activities with these dimensions creates anxiety and unrest in human life These dimensions imply the fourth dimension of transcendence and are acquired in any considerable measure by virtue of it Transcendence is the truth of spiritual reality Thus the real regulation and restrainst of one-dimensional duration of instinctive activities is attained by virtue of the fourth dimension of transcendence which is spiritual in essence This regulation and restraint of activity is effected by immanence of spirit in activity in the form of peace. Karma-Yoga is an eminent form of this coordination and concurrence of transcendental peace with activities of life

Peace has been mentioned in the Upanishads, many times as the supreme character of spiritual reality and as the supreme quality of spiritual conduct In fact peace has been deeply and widely adored in the hymns of the Rigveda It has been contemplated in a very wide and comprehensive sense in the Vedas. The Vedic seers prayed for peace in every sphere of the earth and life They invoked peace for forests, for earth, for sky etc[2] The Upanishads have inherited the message of peace from the Vedas and have developed the philosophy of peace into a spiritual metaphysics In keeping with its Vedic heritage, every Upanishad contains a prayer for peace in its beginning. The prayer is not always an evident adoration of peace but the contents of it are definitely intended for peace These contents signify the spiritual and moral good of man which alone can secure peace in a deeper sense These initial prayers of the Upanishads

2 शान्ति रोषधय पृथिवी शान्ति अन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः ।

are designated as Shantipatha i e 'prayer for peace'. The prayer for peace is repeated at the end of every Upanishad, which affirms comprehensive peace as the supreme end of life.

Apart from this formal and traditional recognition of the value of peace, the Upanishads repeatedly emphasise peace as the supreme character of the supreme spiritual reality[3] The Mandukya Upanishad mentions peace, alongwith good, as the most notable character of the supreme spiritual reality.[4] Shankara in his commentary on the Brahmasutras records the traditional truth of the peaceful nature of the Atman,[5] when he refers to an ancient sage Bahwa who, much in the style of a zen monk, kept silent when asked about the nature of Brahman and when forced to speak said 'I have told you what is Atman. you have not understood it, the Atman is silent and peaceful.[6] Katha, Shwetashwatara and other Upanishads have underlined peace as the supreme end of spiritual quest.[7] The end as peace has been repeatedly affirmed in the Shwetashwatara Upanishad.[8]

The deep and profound view of spiritual peace adumberated in the Upanishads is of supreme importance in the context of modern life disturbed deeply both internally and externally. Externally human peace is widely disturbed by the noise increasing in industrial civilization Vehicles and industrial plants are deafening the ears and disturbing the minds of people. Common use of loud-speakers is augmenting the noisy nuisance of an increasingly vocal civilization People pine for

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3 श्वे० उप० ४-१०, ४-१४

4 शान्तं शिव । मां० उप० ७

5 शांकर भाप्य-ब्रह्मसूत्र ३-२-१६

6 उपशान्तोऽयमात्मा । ब्रह्मसूत्र-शाकरभाप्य ३-२-१६

7 श्वे० उप० ४-११, ४-१४

8 श्वे० उप० ४-११, ४-१४

primitive silence and peace of forests They seek relief in lonely and peaceful island resorts which have been preserved for the recreation of man The inner peace of mind has been disturbed by tormenting ideas which so commonly creep in the mind of modern man and by the mental tension which they create Alienation of man from man, in the busy, pragmatic and materialistic life of modern times, has deprived man of affectionate sentiments which tethered human hearts from within by cords of tender consideration Man finds himself lonely in the enormous crowds of cities He is reduced to nothingless as a subject in the emphatic and enormous objective environment fascinating him by its glory but frustrating him by its impersonal enormity Man is losing his sleep in this inner and outer disturbance Sleep is a supremely important mode of natural peace which also has spiritual significance People in the West are turning to oriental spiritualism for mental peace Indian spiritualism with its deep and profound philosophy of peace (and of sleep also) can afford a required relief to modern man But it can be possible only when the unrestricted growth of industrial civilization can be restrained and regulated according to the principles of inner and spiritual peace of man

Peace is a highly complex concept It comprehends in its wide scope several other disciplines of spiritual life which can be trated as modes of peace Silence is one such important mode of peace Externally silence is negation or absence of speech It is effected by restraint of speech Speech is a vocal and noisy phenomenon Silence is negation of noise Noise or speech is an activity which, in its excess, creates disturbance in mind Silence is akin to peace Speech is an activity. Silence as restraint of speech implies transcendence of activity. This transcendence is the secret of the kinship of silence with spirit The peacefulness of spirit also implies its silence and its being above and beyond speech The anecdote found in Shankara's commentary on the Brahmasutras in which sage Bahwa keeps silent in response to the inquiry of a disciple suggests

that the Brahman is peaceful, and also that it is silent and beyond speech It is to be sought in silence The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad finds it beyond silence[9] Vocal volumes of Vedanta are not very much justified Even to say that the Brahman is beyond speech involves a self-contradiction, though utterance in some form may be practically necessary for spiritual instruction

The Kena Upanishad maintains that the speech does not reach Brahman[10] The Taittiriya Upanishad asserts that the speech returns from it without getting to it.[11] Speech is inintellectual and involves a duality of subject and object. The spirit is non-dualistic Hence speech cannot approach and express the spirit It is to be sought in peaceful and silent contemplation Due to the kinship of silence with the spirit, silence is identified at one place in the Upanishad, with Brahmacharya[12] Brahmacharya is conduct according to spirit which implies restraint of senses Sex is the most urgent and violent of all instincts Hence Brahmacharya came to be identified with celebacy Speech is also very violent and an excessively active sense-organ All activity violates the veracity of Brahman. Hence it is quite proper to understand silence as a mode of Brahmacharya

Civilization suffers as much from mechanical noise as it does from excess of vocal noise Speaking has become a chronic malady with man He speaks far more than it is necessary to do Infliction of speech is a common nuisance It is a sign of unspirituality (except when it is cordial, which it is rarely) and disturbs peace and joy of others. Spiritualization of civilization for peace, and happiness of man needs minimization

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9. बृह० उप० ३-५-१

10 न वागाच्छति । केन उप० १-३

11 यतो वाच निवर्त्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह । तै० उप० २-४

12 मौन ब्रह्मचर्य मेव । बृह० उप०

of vocal voice as much as it does reduction of mechanical noise. The non-dual spirit reveals its blissful joy in the cordial silence of love. The child in mother's lap and the beloved in the arms of her lover know the truth of the silent delight of spirit. Silence understanding among persons also gives a glimpse of it

So peace and silence are two cardinal pacific virtues recognised in the Upanishads Tranquility is also underlined as a pacific virtue It is akin to peace and silence But tranquility signifies specifically the calm and peacefulness of mind Peace is wider in its meaning and silence signifies restraint of speech which is apparently negative Tranquility is the essence of both peace and silence It is the intention of silence Silence is merely an external observance, if it is not supported by inner tranquility Tranquility is closer to peace as it implies a restraint of all senses The Vedic prayers and initial prayers of some Upanishads contain invocations for good which also imply tranquility[13] The Mundaka Upanishad regards tranquility as an important qualification for a seeker of spiritual truth and considers it closely related to peace of mind[14] Tranquility as a restraint of senses is prescribed by Shankara as an important qualification for seekers of spiritual truth[15]

Detachment and modesty also can be included among pacific virtues Much conflict and unrest is created by undue attachment, immodesty and arrogance. Detachment reduces conflict and unrest Humility also avoids unnecessary conflict It is a spiritual virtue which can be attained only by transcendence of ego, as arrogance is an undue assertion of ego There are some examples of intellectual arrogance in the Upanishads,

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13 शं नो मित्र । शं वरुण । तैत्तिरीय शान्तिपाठ

14 मु० उप० १-२-११, १-२-१३

15 शमदमादि पट सम्पत् । ब्रह्मसूत्र-साधन चतुष्टय

but most of the sages including Yajnavalkya[16] present an example of humility which is a sign of their greater spirituality in comparison to arrogant inquires. These and other pacific virtues can enlighten the way to spiritual delight in a life full of noise, nuisance and unrest

16 नमो वयं ब्रह्मिष्ठाय कुर्मः । बृह० उप० ३-१-२

CHAPTER XXXI

# DYNAMIC VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

The pacific virtues described in the previous chapter are not evidently active virtues. They are apparently and externally inactive. The core of these virtues consists in transcendence of activity and of disturbance that accompanies it Transcendence of activity and duration is undoubtedly the deepest truth of these virtues and their kinship with spirituality. Ascetic virtues also are opposed to activity. They signify withdrawal from empirical involvement and activity. The opposition of activity implied in the ascetic and pacific virtues is not intended to deny activity or to ignore the dynamic character of life. In fact it is intended to overcome and transcend the determinism of action and time and to reveal the delightful spiritual truth of life which lies above determination and duration. Spiritual delight is the supreme spiritual truth of life which the sages of the Upanishads miraculously visualized and mercifully revealed to us, though it is in reality not expressible through words. It can only be realized in a most intimate and immediate non-dualistic experience.

The supreme spiritual reality is not static or entirely opposed to activity It is transcendent of all empirical modes of being yet it is also dynamic.[1] Dynamics is a dimension of reality, but it is not the whole of it It is transcended, though also comprehended, in the whole nature of reality. It is co-ordinate and coherent wih the transcendental and delightful reality It is to be co-ordinated with transcendent reality, and in this co-ordination it becomes a coherent dimension of reality. Activity in this co-ordinated form is admissible in the Vedanta of the

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1 तदेजति । ईश उप० ५

Upanishads The ascetic and pacific virtues are not opposed to such activity. They are opposed to determinate and naturalistic activity, which is not really delightful as it is one dimensional while delight is the fourth and transcendent dimension of life Activity with delight is the expression of the dynamic dimension of reality Asceticism with its forbearance and restraint and pacificism with its tranquility and calm are modes of moral discipline which is not antagonistic but is in fact conducive to such spiritualized activity. This discipline is not for the denial but for the promotion of excellence and delight in activities of life. The denial and restraint of determinate activity is undoubtedly the purpose of ascetic and pacific discipline of the Upanishads

It is with this background that we have to understand the contradictory statements of the Upanishads like 'it moves and it does not move'[2] and reconcile the ascetic and pacific denial of activity with the dynamic dimension of reality and with the dynamic dimension of reality and with the dynamic demands of life It is also with this background that we have to understand the references to Karma or action found in the moral and ritual contexts in the Upanishads.

It is remarkable that the Isha Upanishad, which is the first and foremost among Upanishads in the traditional order of Upanishads, contains an empbhatic injunction for Karma or action in its very beginning[3] and also affirms clearly the dynamic nature of reality[4] The Bhagwadgita is a complete and comprehensive gospel of action co-ordinated with spiritual reality. But the Upanishads also affirm the dynamic nature of reality and the

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2 तदेजति तन्न एजति । ईश उप० ५

3 कुर्व्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत शतं समा· । ईश उप० २

4 तदेजति । ईश उप० ५

co-ordination of action with reality by spiritualization of our attitude to action. The Isha Upanishad is foremost among the Upanishads which clearly and candidly affirms the dynamic character of reality and enjoins upon man to devote to action all life with a spiritual attitude. The second verse of the Isha Upanishad contains the seed of the comprehensive philosophy of Karma Yoga propounded in the Bhagwadgita. The injunction to action is contained in the first line of the verse and the second line reveals the inevitability of action which is detailed in the Gita, and also suggests the spiritualization of action which is worked out deeply and thoroughly in the Gita. But the first verse of the Isha Upanishad also signifies the principles of Karma Yoga in a clear and comprehensive manner. The integration of all empirical modes of existence and life with spiritual reality is the very essence of Karma Yoga or spiritualization of action It is commanded in the very first phrase of the first verse of the Isha Upanishad. The spiritual integration of objects commanded in this phrase is theoretically a most comprehensive and practically a most effective manner of spiritualization of activity and life All activity pertains to objects covetted for enjoyment Integration of objects with spirit is a practically most effective way of spiritualization of activity which is inevitable in its natural determinism The principle of renunciation and enjoyment of objects with an attitude of renunciation, stated in the second line of the first verse, is not a compromise of principles but a realistic and practical mode of attaining the difficult spiritual ideal. Further injunction against greed, with a clarification of the externality of wealth and other possessions, is a convincing elaboration of the soundness of spirituo-dynamic philosophy of the Isha Upanishad and it also affords a reinforcement for the spiritual discipline prescribed by it

Ethical virtues are ethical with regard to their volitional power, but they are spiritual in respect of their altruism and their transcendence of egoistic determination implied in it They

are an approximation to spirit and are thus a most efficacious mode of attaining the spiritual goal of life. With all the incoherence of action with reality in regard to certain metaphysical principles, ethical virtues are the only practical course of spiritualization of life. The ascetic virtues emphasise a more negative discipline, while the pacific virtues signify the positive pole of transcendence ensured by ascetic virtues. The dynamic virtues represent a synthesis of both ascetic and pacific virtues with practical and active life and also mark a way for actual approximation of life to spiritual being.

The Isha Upanishad contains in its first two verses the cardinal doctrine of this synthesis, which is elaborated in the Gita in a clear, crip and succint form Other Upanishads also subscribe to this synthetic spiritualism in some measure inspite of the metaphysical antagonism of some of them to activity of life It is remarkable that the Kena and the Chhandogya Upanishads affirm the co-ordination of spiritual reality with empirical dynamics of life. The Kena Upanishad regards spirit as the ultimate force behind all sensory and organic activity. The spirit according to it is the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear i.e the ultimate force behind senses as also the ultimate force of life behind the vital and psychic being of man. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also considers the spirit to be the original force behind all activities of life.[5] The spiritual reality is transcendent in nature, but dynamics is an actual dimension of it and it inspires all ethical activity.

The altruism, implied in moral action and the ethical merit which results from it, is spiritual in nature and partakes of its reality. The Prashna Upanishad mentions heaven as the fruit of noble action.[6] The Kena Upanishad regards moral action as

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5 आत्मना कर्म करोति । बृह० उप० १-४-७

6 प्रश्न उप० १-१६

one of the three foundations of spiritual knowledge, alongwith penance and restraint of senses[7] This view of the Kena Upanishad makes moral action the foundation of spiritual discipline and connects it closely with spiritual realization. The Isha Upanishad, which urges us in its beginning, to devote to action, affirms the illusory character of action and characterizes it as Avidya i.e. ignorance because action is not identical with spiritual experience,[8] but it also considers it as a necessary part of the total spiritual discipline According to it the total spiritual discipline consists of both spiritual knowledge and moral action The actual immortality is attained by spiritual knowledge, but empirical phenomenon of death is overcome by moral action which is technically called Avidya or ignorance[9] Towards the end, the Isha Upanishad refers to the prayer of a dying man to God for considering the merit of his actions[10] The Katha Upanishad also regards good conduct as necessary for the attainment of spiritual realization.[11] The mental peace which the Katha Upanishad considers as a necessary condition for spiritual realization is not possible without abandoning evil acts and without adopting good conduct.[12]

The Prashna Upanishad recommends an observance which it designates as the Prajapati Vrata for the attainment of Brahmaloka.[13] Simple straightforward, uncrooked and truthful con-

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7 केन उप० ४-८

8 ईश उप० ११

9 अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते । ईश उप० ११

10 कृतं स्मर । ईश उप० १७

11 नाऽविरतो दुश्चरितात् । कठ उप० १-२-३४

12 नाऽशान्तो नाऽसमाहित. । कठ उप० १-१५

13 प्रजापति-व्रतम् चरन्ति । प्रश्न उप० १-१५

duct is also considered to be necessary for the attainment of Brahmaloka[14] The Mundaka Upanishad recollects the vision of Vedic seers about religious and moral actions and urges upon people to observe these actions for attainment of good fruit.[15] Like the Prashna Upanishad, the Mundaka Upanishad also affirms the promise of heaven as a fruit of good acts and other religious observances[16] It is to be noted in this context that the Mundaka Upanishad ultimately regards ritual actions as belonging to the realm of ignorance and as leading only to temporary sojourn in heavenly regions from where people come down to the earth after their merit, earned by good acts, is exhausted[17] The spiritual goal can be attained by knowledge of truth which is to be received from a realized teacher, and it cannot be attained by actions as it is not of the nature of a result produced by acts[18] Still it does not completely denounce action and treats it as concurrent with spiritual enjoyment,[19] much in the spirit of the Bhagwadgita It also regards performance of religious and ritual actions as a pre-condition for the self-realization of the preceptors who are qualified to impart spiritual knowledge to devoted disciples[20] The Taittiriya Upanishad contains in its famous convocation address injunctions to departing disciples for observing moral acts in which truth-speaking, righteous acts, study of Vedas, earning money, producing pro-

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14 तेषामसौ विरजो ब्रह्मलोको न येषु जिह्ममनृतं न माया चेति ।

प्रश्न उप० १-१६

15 मुण्डक उप० १-२-१

16 एप व पुण्य सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोक । प्रश्न उप० १-२६

17 क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते । मुण्डक उप० १-२-९

18 नास्त्यकृत कृतेन । मुण्डक उप० १-२-१२

19 आत्मक्रीड आत्मरति क्रियासनेप ब्रह्मविदा वरिष्ठः ।

मु० उप० ३-१-४

20 क्रियावन्त श्रोत्रिया ब्रह्मनिष्ठा । मुण्डक उप० ३-२-१०

geny and performance of oblations to the manes are included [21]
Truth-speaking and righteous conduct are dynamic virtues of wide significance They govern the dynamics of almost the whole life of man The Convocation urges upon disciples to follow the noble acts of their preceptors and not to follow their faults [22] It instructs them to emulate the example of noble and spiritual people whenever there arose a doubt about actions to be done [23] The Taittiriya Upanishad evidently regards righteous actions as the duty of a house-holder [24] It is only after fulfilling the duties of domestic life that one should think of relinquishing actions and seeking the spiritual reality which is beyond actions and seeking the spiritual reality which is beyond actions. It instructs people to collect corn for food and alms[25] and to be hospitable to guests [26] Hospitality is a highly generous and dynamic virtue It requires deeper, stronger and nobler will than is needed for acts of self-interest. Charity also is a generous moral virtue which, like hospitality, requires a deeper and nobler will.[27]

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21 सत्य वद । धर्मं चर । आचार्याय प्रिय धनमाहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सी. । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

22 यान्यस्माक सुचरितानि तानि त्वयोपास्यानि । तै० उप० १-११

23 ये तत्र ब्राह्मणा सम्मर्शिन । युक्ता आयुक्ता । अलूक्षा धर्मकामा स्यु । यथा ते तत्र वर्तेरन: तथा तत्र वर्तेथा । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

24 धर्म चर । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

25 अन्न बहु कुर्वीत । तै० उप० ३-९
बह्वन्नं प्राप्नुयात् । तै० उप० ३-१०

26 अतिथि देवो भव । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११
न कचन वसतौ प्रत्याचक्षीत । तै० उप० ३-१०

27 श्रद्धया देयम् । तैत्तिरीय० उप० १-११

The Shwetashwatara Upanishad judiciously relates actions with spiritual realization which lies beyond them. It urges seekers of truth to devote to noble actions and to dedicate them to God[28] This resembles the Karma Philosophy of the Bhagwadgita, according to which spiritual salvation can be attained by dedication of actions to God.

The Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads reveal highest spiritual truths, but they also contain, in their earlier parts treatments of ritual and moral actions. With all their spiritualism they are not adverse to actions. The Chhandogya Upanishad indicates the principle of the efficacy and nobility of actions in the form of a synthesis of knowledge, faith and devotion or Yoga as motivation of actions[29] Sage Ushasti is seen to be anxious to act as a presiding priest at the sacrifice to be performed by a king.[30] The Chhandogya Upanishad also regards good acts as efficacious in securing rebirth in noble species[31] It considers faith as essential for action but regards faith to be dynamic in character. Sanatkumar explains to Narada that man develops faith by doing action.[32] The hedonic motive of actions is also revealed in the Chhandogya Upanishad. Sanatkumar explains to Narada that man is motivated in actions by the pleasure[33] But the Chhandogya Upanishad regards infinite spirit as the ultimate source of pleasure,[34] and confirms the contention of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that all creatures live

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28 श्वेताश्वतर उप० ६-४

29 छान्दोग्य उप० १-१-१०

30 छान्दोग्य उप० १-१०-६

31 छान्दोग्य उप० ५-१०-७

32 यदा वै करोत्यथ निष्तिष्ठति । छा० उप० ७-२१-१

33 यदा वै सुखं लभतेऽथ करोति । छा० उप० ७-२२-१

34 यो वै भूमा तत्सुखम् । छां० उप० ७-२३-१

by a fraction of spiritual delight.[35] The Chhandogya Upanishad also considers the celestial regions attained by good act as temporary sojourns[36]

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also subscribes to the idea that higher regions are attained by good acts[37] But it ascribes a real ethical value to good acts. It believes that conduct characterizes the nature and being of man One who performs meritorious acts become meritorious[33] One who performs noble acts become noble.[39] Noble acts and moral conduct may not be commensurable with spiritual reality but they are conducive to its realization by uplifting the being of man The dynamic and volitional nature of spiritual reality affords a ground for linking moral dynamics of life with spiritual salvation

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35 एतस्यैव आनन्दस्य मात्रामुपजीवन्ति भूतानि । बृह० उप० ४-३-३२

36 छान्दोग्य उप० ८-१-६

37 बृह० उप० ६-२-१६

38 पुण्यो वै पुण्यकर्मणा भवति । बृह० उप० ३-२-१३

39 साधुकारी साधुर्भवति । बृह० उप० ४-४-५

## CHAPTER XXXII

# RITUAL VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are spiritual gospels and are treated by Shankara to be opposed to the ritualism of earlier portions of the Vedas. Shankara in his commentaries upon Upanishads has remarked in the very introductions that the earlier portions of the Vedas so far dealtwith are ritual and they end herewith, and now in the Upanishads begins the theme of the knowledge of Brahman[1] The Upanishads are spiritual treatises. They propound the spiritual reality called Brahman. Brahman is the eternal essence of our being. It is not to be brought about by any action[2] Even moral actions are not causally connected with it, not to say of ritual actions which are of a more external character than moral actions Shankara is justified in his contention both philosophically and textually in a general manner as well as on the basis of textual consideration The texts of the Upanishads largely deal with the spiritual philosophy of Brahman, though there are sprinklings of ritual observances particularly in the larger Upanishads Philosophically actions and rituals are not integral to Brahman as they are temporal, and are external to it. The Brahman is eternal reality and no actions and rituals can bring it about into being.[3] It is only to be revealed in spiritual realization.

Yet with all the spiritualism of the Upanishads we find that the considerable portions, particularly of the larger Upanishads, deal with rituals. The Chhandogya and the

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1 केन उप० भाष्य भूमिका ।

2 नास्त्यकृत: कृतेन । मुण्डक उप० १-२-१२

3 Ibid.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishads particularly contain large ritual sections The earlier sections of these two Upanishads seem to be a continuation of the ritualism of the Brahmanas with which they are connected as their concluding portions. Some other Upanishads also have references to rituals It is true that none of the Upanishads regard rituals to be efficacious in bringing about Brahman-realization, on the other hand, some statements of the Upanishads candidly condemn ritualism and clearly deny the efficacy of actions and rituals in bringing about Brahman-experience[4] Yet it is notable that the Upanishads recognise the relative value of moral actions as well as rituals Many ritual observances are recommended in the Upanishads They lead to higher regions by the merit accrued from them They also constitute a part of moral discipline which is at least indirectly conducive to spiritual enlightenment.

In view of the textual relation of rituals with the Upanishads it is relevant to consider the significance and value of rituals in life as well as in spiritual discipline. Rituals and actons appear to be external as they are performed with the help of dynamic sense organs, particularly hands and speech Some rituals like the Mantha Karma described at the end of the Brihadaranyaka pertain to sexual dynamics The external and dynamic character of rituals has led to an oblivation of their internal significance. The dynamic character of rituals has been contrasted with the non-temporal and eternal nature of Brahman and thus rituals have been rejected as having no spiritual significance They are ragarded as merely external observances of some sacrificial formalities. They bring about according to the contentions of ritualistic philosophy of Brahmanas, some secular or celestial benefits which are ultimately perishable, but these cannot be helpful in the realization of Brahman which is eternal and unconnected with time and activity. The disposi-

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4 मुण्डक उप० १-२-७

tion and intentions of the ritualists are also responsible for the complete denial of spiritual significance of rituals. The abstract view of Brahman as contemplated in the Upanishads also sharpens the contrast of spirituality with ritualism. But in fact the rituals contain a valuable core of concrete spirituality which is to be sincerely discovered and modestly recognised

The spiritual significance of rituals consists in the mode and spirit of their performance Externally they appear to be manual and vocal performances, but the modes of manual and vocal activity involved in ritual observances imply a concrete and considerable spirituality. Spirituality is an inner reality characterized by non-duality and joy. This non-duality has been often conceived in an abstract and ontological manner which has led to the rendering of Advaita as Monism Ontological view of Vedanta has extranged a most living philosophy from concrete life Ontological emphasis has also resulted in the neglect of the Blissful character of Brahman The Upanishads also deal elaborately with cosmology and the Brahma Sutras start with it and proceed with disputation with rival theories. Shankara emphasises the identity of subject against Buddhistic denial of it The ontological and epistemological bias of Vedanta has effected an oblivation of the Blissful character of Brahman, which according to the Upanishads is the supreme truth about Brahman Bliss is a concrete human experience akin to delight and joy The philosophy of Bliss, which the Vedanta originally is, is intimately related to concrete human life. Bliss or delight in concrete life is a non-dualistic integral experience It reveals only when duality of individualism is transcended and the duality of subject object is also overcome Bliss sustains life as the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad maintains[5] It is the core of life In some measure and form it is available in ordinary life also. Maternal and conjugal love are common examples of it. The Upa-

5 बृह० उप० ४-३-३२

nishad affirm the blissfulness of conjugal love.[6] Other social and cultural situations in which duality of individualism tends to melt and non-dualism is established also reveal the inner delight which is spiritual in nature

Cultural festivities are a common example of concrete delightful situations of life Vedic ritualism is also a form of cultural festivity and a part of cultural activity As it is a common and collective performance it is essentially non-dualistic and non-individualistic The Vedic hymns intended to be recited at sacrifices are characttrized by plural pronouns like 'nah' The accompaniment of collective singing makes these sacrifices more deeply spiritual like folk music, as voice is the most spiritual of all organic modes of life Collective singing creatts a non-dualistic musical effect in life. The song becomes a common wealth of people like a nation It facilitates effective transcendence of individuality and promotes non-duality It is in this transcendence that spiritual delight is revealed in ritual and other cultural performances Other co-operative activities connected with rituals also generate non-dualism and promote spiritual joy The practical and concrete motive of cultivating spiritual joy is to confirm the inner essence of it and to develop it in social life, besides devoting to meditative discipline prescribed in the Upanishads The Vedic ritualism developed in the direction of individualism and symbolism That was a development which robbed ritualism of the spiritual dimension which characterised collective performance, and made it a selfish observance

But in its cultural and collective form, which is the original intention of Vedic religion, rituals have a concrete spiritual significance and value Looked at from this point of view, rituals

6 सर्वेषामानन्दानामुपस्थ एकायनम् । बृह० उप० २-४-११

do not appear to be so antagonistic to spiritualism as they have been taken to be by Shankara and the Vedantic tradition that followed upon him. Cultural ritual is largely akin to moral discipline in ethical effect and can be conducive to spiritual realization like the latter. Even individual ritual has a disciplinary value It has greater ethical content than the selfish natural acts of man. It has, unlike selfish natural acts, an austerity about it and is motivated by a will Out of the three kinds of rituals two i e. the occasional (Naimittika) and the regular (nitya) have greater spiritual significance which brings them close to moral conduct

All kinds of rituals find mention in the Upanishads. Kings are reported to be performing elaborate sacrifices, as it is done in the beginning of the Chhandogya Upanishad Individuals also are exhorted in the Upanishads to perform sacrifices for various kinds of benefits for children, for wealth etc. as it is done in the Vedic tradition Intellectual symposia organized by kings are a distinctive feature of Upanishads. But collective sacrifices are not very common They have become substituted by individual and symbolic sacrifices Hence ritualism is ridiculed and condemned in some Upanishads But ritualism in general is to be evaluated in the light of the considerations advanced above for understanding the non-dualistic, blissful and spiritualistic implications of collective and cultural rituals The spiritual implications of rituals are quite consistent with the activism of Isha Upanishad, but they can also be co-ordinated with the conduciveness of moral actions for spiritual realization, which is recognised in some Upanishads and is profoundly propounded in the Gita The technical inadequacy of ritual actions for spiritual realization is, of course, to be reconciled.

The Katha, Prashna, and Mundaka Upanishads deal with the rituals The Katha Upanishad opens with the report of a sacrifice performed by Ushanas the father of Nachiketas, in which the former gifted cows to priests But philosophically

Katha Upanishad highlights the futility of worldly pleasures[7] and possessions and crisply underlines the technical inadequacy of actions for spiritual realization[8] The Prashna Upanishad is not evidently ritualistic It presents the model of the penance of Prajapati for man, by virtue of which he creates the universe[9] The Mundaka Upanishad describes some sacrificial rituals which are to be performed strictly according to rules, otherwise they can harm the sacrificer[10] Such sacrifices lead the sacrificer to heaven, and to other higher regions[11] But the Mundaka Upanishad regards these sacrifices as unsteady boats for crossing the ocean of life[12] Those who observe them are like blind men led by the blind[13] They come down to the earth after their merit is exhausted,[14] and they revolve in the cycle of birth and death[15] Therefore those who want salvation should observe penance with faith in the forest and live on alms[16] and approach humbly a realized preceptor who can guide them on the path of self-realization.[17]

The Taittiriya Upanishad deals in its beginning with the linguistic and musical techniques of Vedic sacrifices But it does not deal with them as efficacious for salvation and regards

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7 श्वो भावा· । कठ० उप० १-१-२६
8 न ह्यध्रुवै प्राप्यते तद् ध्रुवम् । क० उप० १-२-१०
9 प्रश्न उप० १-१५
10 मुण्डक उप० १-२-३
11 एष व पुण्य सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोक । मुण्डक उप० १-२-६
12 प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा । मुण्डक उप० १-२-७
13 अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धा । मुण्डक उप० १-२-८
14 क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते । मुण्डक उप० १-२-६
15 जरामृत्यु ते पुनरेवापि यन्ति । मुण्डक उप० १-२-७
16 मुण्डक उप० १-२-११
17 समित्पाणि श्रोत्रिय ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् । मुण्डक उप० १-२-१२

penance as a cardinal mode of spiritual discipline. The Chhandogya Upanishad describes in its earlier portions some sacrifices and modes of worship (Upasanas) which result in some worldly benefits. Worship of OM is described in its very first chapter. Many other modes of worship are described in the first and second chapters Benefits like progeny[18], cattle[19] wealth, pleasures etc results from these worships Sacrifices are regarded as one of the pillars of human faith[20] The sacrifices have been symbolized in the Chhandogya Upanishad,[21] as modes of knowledge rather than of performance. These modes of knowledge give long life,[22] sons,[23] glory and bodily brilliance, valour and glories and energy. Some symbolic fire-sacrifices are described in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Chhandogya Upanishad. In some of them earth, man, woman etc. are symbolically treated as sacrificial fire. The Chhandogya Upanishad maintains that good action leads to good life in next birth[26] Later chapters of Chhandogya deal with spiritual knowledge and expose the inadequacy of rituals for self-realization. The parable of Narada in which he declares that he is afflicted by sorrow because he knows the ritual hymns, but not the self, illustrates this limitation of ritualism[27]

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18 छान्दोग्य उप० अध्याय १-५-४

19 छान्दोग्य उप० २-६-२

20 त्रयो धर्मस्कन्धाः । छान्दोग्य उप० २-२३-१

21 छान्दोग्य उप० ३-१६-१

22 षोडश वर्ष शत जीवति । छान्दोग्य उप० ३-१६-७

23 अस्य कुले वीरो जायते । छा० उप० ३-१३-६

24 कीर्तिमान् व्युष्टिमान् भवति । छा० उप० ३-१३-४

25 ओजस्वी महान्भवति । छा० उप० ३-१३-५

26 छा० उप० ५-१०-७

27 छा० उप० ७-१-३

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also carries the ritual heritage of the Aranyaka of which it is the concluding part. It opens with a symbolic ritual of Ashwamedha in which the aurora, sun etc. are represented as the head, eyes etc of the sacrificial horse[28] Other such ritual symbolisms follow in the first chapter of Brihadaranyaka. The Brihadaranyaka further refers to worships which make a man and his progeny energetic, bring him children, cattle,[29] and whereby he becomes victorious in battle,[30] brilliant in facial appearance,[31] enjoys full age and does not face premature death.[32] Yagyavalkya, the greatest spiritualist of the Upanishad holds some ritualistic discussions with several contemporary sages in the third chapter of the Upanishad Some other modes of worship are mentioned in the fifth chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads and their results are stated. The sixth chapter of the Upanishad also contains descriptions of some worships with their benefits, among which the worship of five Fires leads to highest celestial regions from which a person never returns and which form the final realm of ultimate salvation[33] The sixth and the last chapter of the Upanishad closes with a ritual which is called Srimantha and which brings glory of a man[34] Strangely enough an Upanishad which reveals deepest spiritual truths in the middle of its body ends with a sexual ritual for producing good children[35] It is true that ritualism is discounted much in several statements of Upanishads and any kind of

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28 उपा वा अश्वस्य मेध्यस्य शिर । वृह० उप० १-१-१

29 तेजस्विनी हास्य प्रजा भवति । वृह० उप० २-१-४

30 जिष्णु हापराजिष्णुर्भवति । वृह० उप० २-१-६

31 गोचिष्णहांस्य प्रजा भवति । वृह० उप० २-१-९

32 नैन पुरा कालान्मृत्युरागच्छति । वृह० उप० २-१-१२

33 वृह० उप० ६-२-१५

34 वृह० उप० ६-३-१

35 वृह० उप० ६-४-१

action is technically external to spiritual reality, yet ritual virtues are assigned considerable value in Upanishads, though this value is undoubtedly relative. The ritual bring about some earthly and celestial good which can be indirectly conducive to final salvation Religious merit makes a man meritorious[36] and moral good makes a man good[37] All good is essentially spiritual and can help in advance towards spiritual enlightenment.

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36 पुण्यो वै पुण्यकर्मणा भवति । वृह० उप० ३-२-१३

37 साधुकारी साधुर्भवति । वृह० उप० ४-४-५

CHAPTER XXXIII

# RELIGIOUS VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

Ritual virtues based on faith in super-natural truths, on devotion to procedural forms, on hope of rewards from observance of these forms etc. are essentially religious. They are ritual as they are closely associated with rituals which are only an aspect of religion and signify external forms of religion The inner core of religion consists in the general attitude of faith, devotion and hope, which can express in other modes than ritual and which is important in regard to its inner general disposition

The Upanishads are essentially spiritual works The heart of the Upanishads are statements and instructions which particularly pertain to the assertion of spiritual reality and its realization. But many other things, besides spirituality, are mixed up in the Upanishads as the gift of their Vedic heritage which is religious, ritual, ethical, social, secular, sexual etc. Spirituality also is religious in so far as it is not secular and rational and is transcendental It is more deeply esoteric than even religion It is not prophetic or priestly but it is preceptorial as guidance of a realized teacher is necessary for the heir of spiritual aspirants Some observances which are recommended for spiritual realization can also be regarded as religious. Some rituals also are prescribed in Upanishads not as direct means of spiritual realization, but as indirect means of it through acquisition of merit, virtue and higher regions The essential spiritualism of the regions. The essential spiritualism of the Upanishads is surrounded in several religious aspects inherited from the dominantly religious cultural tradition of the earlier parts of the Vedas. Hence it will be proper to consider the nature of religious virtues found in the Upanishads in the

context of spirituality and also besides it in the context of ritual observances and socio-ethical discipline.

Faith or reverence is the foremost religious virtue. All religions are based on faith and are therefore often designated as Faiths. This faith is directed towards several things: God, divinities, prophets, scriptures, tenets, dogmas etc. But in all cases it is an altruistic i.e. other-regarding sentiment which implies a submission of ego to something over and above the ego. Submission and transcendence of ego is the main feature of faith. Faith is a complex sentiment in which trust, love, reverence, fear etc. fuse to form a unique sentiment that comprehends all these but is distinct from all these considered separately. Besides egoism, it is above reason, argument and doubt. It can be called dognatic and blind, and often results in conflict with other faiths due to blindness, but in reality it is tacit and trustful devotion intended to following a unitary course of discipline, and conflict of any kind is an extraneous incident caused by other factors of human character besides faith itself. Faith is only to be followed for oneself. As common faith it can be followed by a community. But in fact, faith does not necessarily involve conflict, unless conflict or opposition has been included as a tenet of some faith. Such a provision in any faith is ultra-vires, faith in itself is esoteric and intrinsic. It is personal in the sense that it is concerned with one's own religious and spiritual discipline rather than with redemption of others. Strictly speaking even preaching and propagation of faith is not very consistent with the real character of faith In this respect the Upanishadic sages are the truest prophets of truth as they are not disposed to preach and propagate their gospel: they reluctantly disclose the truth to deserving disciples.

Faith is a disposition and also a discipline. It has been emphasised as a discipline in the Upanishads Sages have re-

commended it as a cardinal means for spiritual enlightenment. We have dealt with it in the chapter dealing with cardinal virtues among which also, faith is the foremost. Here we intend to deal with it as a religious virtue in religious context. Faith as a spiritual virtue also requires reverence for reality and for the preceptor who undertakes to guide disciples. But in the religious context it becomes wider according to the scope in which it functions. Faith, in the Upanishads, is directed towards many things, implicitly and even explicitly. Rituals, sacrifices and other observances imply faith in scriptures, gods, celestial regions etc Reverence for preceptors, parents, guests etc. also is included in faith. Love and fear are dominant in theistic faith Upanishadic faith is more of heartfelt reverence and pious regard than love or fear. It is a sacred and cordial sentiment The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad reveals the cordiality of faith and reverence. According to it faith or reverence is a sacred sentiment of heart.[1] Heart and not mind is the seat of it [2] It should be secured against wreckless reasoning and arrogant argument. We may call it spiritual as spirit according to Upanishad is above reason[3] and beyond speech also. It is a deep silent trust in truth and the teacher of truth.

The Upanishads have affirmed the importance and value of faith and reverence at several places. The Katha[4], Prashna,[5]

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1 हृदयेन हि श्रद्धा जानाति । बृह० उप० ३-९-२१

2 हृदये ह्येव श्रद्धा प्रतिष्ठिता भवति । बृह० उप० ३-९-२१

3 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । कठ उप० १-२-९

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा । कठ उप० २-३-१२

4 श्रद्धाऽऽविवेश कठ उप० १-१-२

5 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया । १-१-१

Mundaka,[6] Taittiriya,[7] Shwetashwatara,[8] etc. declare it to be the supreme means of self-realization The Prashna Upanishad co-ordinates it with penance and celebacy as these cannot be observed without unflinching faith[9] The three together bring glory to man[10] The Mundaka Upanishad also unites it with penance.[11]

Besides being prescribed as a Supreme method of discipline, faith or reverence is exemplified in the conduct of several sages and their disciples It is by the inspiration of faith that Nachiketas obeys his father and goes to the Lord of death, that disciples like Satyakama, Bhrigu, Shwetaketu etc. observe prolonged penances in the forests.

Faith or reverence has a unique dimension of sanctity about it It contains a feeling of purity or holiness about a thing on which it rests. Theistic religions ensure such sanctity about God, Prophet and scriptures Polytheistic faiths express it towards deities and preceptors. Sanctity has been rather negatively understood in the context of violation of it by word, argument or action But positively it consists in treating objects of reverence to be above pollution and evil. It is not so much a dogma as an idea of perfection of the object of reverence. The idea of sanctity is derived from spiritual tsanscendence of the principles embodied in the concrete representation of them. The Upanishadic texts are believed to be revealed and sacred scriptures The preceptors, deities even corn, fire, guests etc are

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6 तपःश्रद्धे ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये । मुण्डक उप० १-२-११

7 श्रद्धया देयम् । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

8 श्वे० उप० ४-१७, ६-१८, ६-२२

9 तपस ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया । प्रश्न उप० ५-३

10 तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नो महिमानमनुभवति । प्रश्न उप० ५-३

11 तप श्रद्धे । प्रश्न उप० ५-३

looked upon with sanctity in the Upanishadic etiquette. Even sex is sanctified in the Upanishads and the sexual act is presented as a religious ritual accompanied with Vedic hymns.[12] This wide sanctification of life pervades the popular cultural tradition of India.

Divinity as a religious virtue follows from sanctity It is ascribed to deities, preceptors, parents, guests etc. but it characterizes the attitude of young men towards them Divinity is a super-natural quality of things or persons who are sanctified. They are consirered to be super-human in the sense they are above human infirmities and possess some transcendental excellences Divinities are also believed to be bounteous in their blessings to men Deities, perceptors, parents, guests and even natural objects and phenomena are adored in Indian tradition for their bounties and blessings This Vedic tradition is followed in the Upanishadic thought as it is done in public life This divination is a cardinal mode of Indian culture, by which principles and persons are made immortal and adorable This divination forms a schema of spiritualization of life through faith and reverence The parents, preceptors, guests and corn are divinised in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Fire vital, principle sun, corn, earth, women, water, speech etc are endowed with divinity in several Upanishads Divination of things and persons elevates the quality of man's conduct, introduces a dimension of holiness, sanctity and purity to it, and generates a schema for the spiritualization of life in relation to these things and a persons

Upasana or worship is a typical religious virtue which is prominent in the Upanishads in spite of their essentially spiritual character Several kinds of worships are recommended in the Upanishads These worships are both ritual and symbolic.

12 वृह० उप० अध्याय ६ ब्राह्मण ४

The former are more evidently religious, but the latter also are religious in character. Their religiosity is not ritualistic but it is mental. It is characterized by an idea of adoration It is not contemplation of spirit, but adoration of some divinised idea It is a kind of mental discipline which is helpful in spiritual aspiration It works as a link between ovet ritualism of the Vedas and the abstract contemplation of spirit which is the supreme intention of the Upanishads Examples of these worships are scattered over the Upanishads The Prashna Upanishad describes the Prajapati-vrata which is observed in following the creative penance of Prajapati The Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads particularly inherit the symbolic worships from the Aranyakas The Chhandogya opens with the adortion of OM and proceeds with other forms of worships The Brihadaranyaka also contains adorations of Brahman is the form of Prana, speech, eyes etc. and various other kinds of worship in its fifth and sixth chapters. Though the Kena Upanishad candidly affirms that what is adored is not the reality,[13] as all adoration involves a duality, yet adoration undoubtedly serves as an intermediate schema of progress towards reality

Submission to preceptors, with utmost humility, is an integral part of the practical methodology of Upanishadic spiritualism. Spiritual knowledge is the highest knowledge; the very term Vedanta signifies it. Spiritual truth is the greatest secret,[14] and it is as difficult to realize it as it is to walk on a razer's edge[15] It can be realized only with the help of a realized teacher.[16] Such a teacher was to be approached in utmost humi-

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13 नेदम् यदिदमुपासते । केन उप० १-७, ८

14 केन० उप० ४-७ ।

15 क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया । कठ० उप० १-३-१४

16 आचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद । छा० उप० ६-१४-२

lity with sacrificial fuel in hand[17] which symbolized humility through service Such submission implies dedication also and is akin to religious dedication to God or deities. All spiritual instructions in the Upanishads are imparted by teachers or custodians of knowledge to those who submitted themselves before them in utter humility to receive knowledge The Kena Upanishad contains reminiscences of such instructions[18] The Katha Upanishad is a revelation of truth of life and death to Nachiketas by Yama, the Lord of Death The Prashna Upanishad is an answer to questions of six humble spiritual aspirants by sage Pippalada to whom they approached humbly with sacrificial fuel in their hand.[19] The Mundaka Upanishad is a legacy of spiritual knowledge received from Brahma, the creator, through a succession of sages, the latest of whom received it from Angiras and approached him humbly according to the spiritual tradition The Katha Upanishad contains the famous Upanishadic exhortation which urges every man to approach more learned persons and gain spiritual knowledge from them[20] The Taittiriya Upanishad embodies the famous convocation in which teachers offered the quintessence of their knowledge to their devoted disciples at the time of their departure to their homes after completing their studies[21] The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads contain numerous examples of submission of aspirants, following the Katha exhortation,[22] to learned teachers, though there are a few instances of natural human arrogance and intellectual excesses also in them The Shwetashwatara Upanishad

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17 समित्पाणि श्रोत्रिय ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् । मुं० उप० १-२-१२

18 ये नस्तद् व्याचचक्षिरे । केन उप० १-३

19 ते ह समित्पाणयो भगवन्तपिप्पलादमुपसन्ना । प्रश्न उप० १-१

20 प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत । कठ० उप० १-३-१४

21 तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११ ।

22 प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत । कठ० उप० १-३-१४

affirms dedication to God as the supreme means of salvation.[23] Both submission to teachers and dedication to God are supreme religious virtues which are highly valued in Indian tradition, a supreme mode of spiritual etiquette.

Observance of ritualistic details of form and other modes is also an important religious virtue It is an ethical virtue because the observance of ritual form implies transcendence of ego and a regard for form in itself It is a religious virtue because it is inspired by a faith in form, and in its efficacy and also in the deity concerned. There are special forms of worshipping particular deities This speciality pertains to several aspects of the form, days and dates of worship, the materials and manners of worship, the scriptural texts used in worship. Many modes of worship are characterized by minutely detailed and complex forms All this may look very external, formal and even futile to some persons But in itself it is a highly religious virtue and is considered to be of utmost value in worship Besides faith the form has a quality of being common observance by many persons This adds a spiritual dimension to it which facilates submission of ego to a common conduct implying common faith.

The Upanishads have emphasised the importance of this form at several places The Mundaka, Shwetashwatara, Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads contain instructions about observance of prescribed forms of ritual and disciplinary etiquette, both of which demand humble submission of aspirants before the preceptor The ritual forms found in the Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka are copious and considerable.

The virtues mentioned above are evidently religious. They imply faith, sanctity and adoration which characterize the religious spirit and attitude of man Faith and reverence have a

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23 शरणमहं प्रपद्ये । श्वे० उप० ६-१८

religious regard and truth about them, which transcends reason and skepticism. Divinity is religious in its super-natural glory. Worship is specific religious adoration accompanied with faith, reverence, divinity and ritual form. Submission to teacher can be moral also, but it borders on religious reverence and its definitely so in case of devotion and submission to a deity. The ritual form assumes religious sanctity by its association with worship and by man's faith in its super-natural efficacy.

In fact, even ethical virtues are religious in some respect. Faith in them, when devoid of divinity, worship etc, may be dominantly humanistic But even such faith in ethical virtues acquires a religious temper by such regard for values as transcends ego When man shares these virtues with God who, as by Ramanuja and other theists, is regarded as the ocean of infinite virtues, the virtues embody religiosity by their divine inheritance.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

# SOCIAL VIRTUES IN THE UPANISHADS

All virtues are social in their implication and expression. Virtues are embodiments of good The substance of good becomes the content of human character in the form of virtues. The social implication of virtues becomes more evident by reference to evil which is their negative counterpart Evil is more evidently social. Mostly evil is expressed in the form of wrong committed against other people, though in rare cases it can take the form of wrong against oneself also like suicide etc But a social implication can be discovered even in suicide in the form of an unconscious idea to affect adversely the hearts of some intimates with the intention of arousing their sympathies for the person killing himself Other modes of evil are more obviously social in their effect They evidently constitute wrongs committed against others with the explicit intention of injuring them. The apparent motive in cases like those of stealing etc. may be to benefit oneself wrongly

The positive social significance of ethical virtues can be discovered in the benefit which accrues to others, directly or indirectly, by the virtuous conduct of a good man. The social benefit of virtues like love, compassion etc is obvious as these are directly beneficial to others. But personal or ascetic virtues also like Tapas or penance, Brahmacharya or celebacy etc. are social in their indirect implications They benefit others by guarding them against the evil which results from their opposites. Though the personal and ascetic virtues seem to be confined to a strictly personal discipline, yet they have definite social consequences in the form of safeguard against evil which is involved in their opposites They also result in positive social good in the form of the virtuous conduct to which they lead the person observing them.

Thus all virtues will be found to imply social good either directly or indirectly But some ethical virtues are more evidently social Some of them obtain in the context of definite social relations and are explicitly intended as social virtues. We have seen before that, though the Upanishads are not social either in their purpose or in their setting, yet they recognise cardinal social relations and emphasise regard to others, particularly to parents, preceptors and guests Regard for others, particularly elders, is definitely virtuous as it implies a profound altruism through subordination of ego Though the Upanishads are confidential treatises which embody esoteric spiritual doctrines of ancient Indian sages and for that reason, they emphasise personal and ascetic discipline as an essential means of spiritual attainment, yet by virtue of social implications of spirituality, they are highly regardful of social relations Social regard is implied in and is reflected from personal ascetic discipline All social consideration implies some asceticism in the form of self-denial or denial of self-interest as understood in terms of egoistic hedonism

Thus ascetic discipline and social virtues are related with each other in a direct proportion, and ascetic virtues, though apparently personal are negatively social and altruistic by implication Positively social virtues are emphatically and intendedly social Cultural, social regard is highlighted in Indian tradition and is emphasised in the Upanishads also in accordance with it

The place of social virtues in the Upanishads is to be considered in regard to the aspects of Upanishadic culture indicated above The social virtue of profound regard for social relations is the most conspicuous form of Upanishadic altruism as it underlines the nature of social morality in the concrete modes of specific social relations The parental relations, and, in them also maternal relations are given in the foremost place in Indian tradition It is the cultural legacy of the primitive Indian tradition which originated in the earliest martiarchal stage of human

society and which was more highly honoured in Indian tradition than in the tradition of any other society, as by virtue of some natural facilitations, matriarchal mode of life inspired and urged the cultural development of society in India earlier than perhaps in any other society Supremacy of maternal relations is retained in the linguistic usage and cultural conduct of Indian society.

The Brihadaranyaka and the Chhandogya Upanishads sanctify the sexual act of cohabitation. The Aitareya Upanishad glorifies the pregnant woman[1] The Taittiriya Upanishad glorifies the divinity of the mother and urges the young aspirants to worship (and treat) her with divine reverence, alongwith the father, the guest and the preceptor.[2] Reverence or regard for elders and stangers (guests) is a mode of general regard for man which is the basic social virtue and which is appreciated in all societies Regard for guest is more emphasised in Indian tradition than in any other society. The general love for man is affirmed in the Isha Upanishad as the supreme social virtue.[3] It can be achieved by a spiritual view of life which perceives inner spiritual oneness of all being and apprehends the spiritual basis of all life.[4] One who perceives spiritual unity of all being does not hate any one i.e loves all beings[5] Sage Yajnavalkya also reveals in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the supreme spiritual truth of life, that all relations are dear to us on account of spirit.[6]

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1 सा भावयित्री भावयि तव्या। ऐत० उप० २-१-३

2 मातृदेवो भव पितृदेवो भव अतिथिदेवो भव आचार्यदेवो भव।

तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

3 यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति।

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते। ईश उप० ६

4 Ibid

5 Ibid.

6 आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति। बृह० उप० ४-५-६

The spiritual basis of social regard and human love overcomes the natural and genetic limitations of human affections and founds them on a common spiritual basis. It is only on the basis of the spiritual principle that social regard and human affections can be possible Without this basis even genetic relations will not endure. Children may love parents till they depend on them But when they become grown up they begin to disregard parents Natural life is one-dimensional. It proceeds with time and does not look backward A grown up youngman loves his children as his parents loved him, but he disregards his parents Regard for parents can only be a cultural achievement inspired by a spiritual view of life. The dimension of reverence is not natural, though it enhances the richness of life by a new dimension It is to be cultivated It has been deeply enshrined in Indian tradition Regard for elders, parents, teachers etc has been strongly emphasised in codes of conduct It continued to be effective for a long time in Indian life. It has recently been disturbed by the dominance of one-dimensional life in modern civilization, which has created what is called generation gap in sociological parlance It has deprived old parents of association with and participation in the life of married children and has made them miserable. This misery will befall all young people also in their turn when they grow old Disregard of parents has deprived young couples of an additional spirituo-cultural dimension, which could enrich their life, and has also deprived their children of deep affection of grand-parents. It has created a disharmony in society which is robbing life of wider happiness and deeper joy under the temporary illusion of one-dimensional hedonism

Regard for teachers and elders was also emphasised in Indian tradition, along with regards for parents The Taittiriya Upanishad enjoins upon young students to have reverence and regard for mother, the father, the stranger (guest) and the teacher[7] The

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7 मातृ देवो भव पितृ देवो भव अतिथि देवो भव आचार्य देवो भव ।

तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

guest and the teacher are bracketed with the parents. That is of great significance This comprehensive injunction seeks to infuse the intimacy of regard for parents into general human relationship with elders, particularly with teachers. Teachers are the custodians of the cultural tradition of a society. Any amount of reverence and regard is too small a reward for the cultural service they render to society. Intellectual and cultural commitment, maintenance of tradition of learning and culture, transmission of knowledge and continuance of tradition are supreme services of teachers to society. Disregard of younger people disturbs their devotion and dedication to the cultural cause of society and creates disharmony and unhappiness in society. Unrest and indiscipline among young people and consequent disharmony in society is a consequence of this disregard. The traditional doctrine of regard for elders embodies a profound secret of social and cultural life, which is to be seriously by generations of mankind

Motherhood is the natural root of this regard for elders. Fatherhood became combined with it with the emergence of patriarchal society. The founding of the family fostered affections among breathren and kins and extended these affections to wider society. Such an affectionate and regardful kinship can bestow the cultural benefits of family to society. The Upanishads have the credit of affording scriptural sanctity to close relations of human kinship, which are glorified in Indian tradition and enshrined in Indian codes of conduct, though all these are lacking in due emphasis on the duties of elders to young people

The deep devotion of sages and preceptors to spiritual learning and aspiration is also to be looked at as a supreme social virtue because the examples of these sages and preceptors shine like light-houses in the stormy waters of mundane life and enlighten the way of sailors who venture to voyage in search and hope of transcendent shores

The sincere interest of kings like Janaka in spiritual thought and also in the cultivation of a moral people like king Janashruti, is also to be considered as so remarkable a social virtue of the Upanishadic age and society that examples of it will be rare to find in any other age in any other society.

Besides these evidently social virtues, some positive virtues emphasised in the Upanishads also, have deep social implications. All virtues are social as they are altruistic in effect and in implication Altruism signifies good of others which makes altruistic virtues concretely social. The virtues of love, compassion, and charity are evidently social. They exhibit great regard for others and are distinctly directed towards rendering good to others. Love is essentially the supreme principle of altruistic good without which love is a sentimental illusion Compassion is a deeper form of love directed towards one who is suffering and implies a keen intention to render to him both emotional and practical good Charity consists in material and economic good of others These are liberal virtues and signify abundant social good Love is the cardinal positive virtue of the Isha Upanishad cultivated in overcoming hatred through oneness of spirit[8] Compassion is emphasised in Upanishad[9] Charity with humility and regard is prescribed in the Taittiriya Upanishad[10]

The dynamic virtue of altruistic action contained in the Isha Upanishad[11] and presented more fully in the Gita is highly social What is clearly called Karma-Yoga in Gita and is intended or implied in Upanishads is certainly social and altruistic conduct Selfish actions are to be extremely reduced in Karma-yoga. The spiritual character of action is to be exhibited and exempli-

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8 ततो न विजुगुप्सते । ईश उप० ६

9 दयध्वम् । वृह० उप० ५-२-३

10 ह्रिया देयम् । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

11 कुर्व्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि । ईश उप० २

fied mainly in regard to social and altruistic action. Spiritual will, which transcends selfish desires, can be expressed only in such actions The good acts enjoined upon disciples in the Taittiriya Upanishads are also intended to be social and altruistic.[12]

Rituals came to be largely selfish as sacrifices came to be performed for progeny, paradise etc. But original Vedic rituals were collective and social performances for common good. Even selfish rituals became social in the implications of their procedure. Cooperation of other persons was needed in regard to several things, which resulted in economic benefit to them Ancient and medieval Indian economy for lower classes of society was largely connected with such co-operation from which economic benefit accrued to them. Charity which was a necessary concommittant of rituals also implied an economic social good, particularly of economically weaker sections of society.

The cardinal virtues of Truth, Reverence, Celebacy and Penance constitute the four pillars of the socio-ethical edifice of of life. Truth is the supreme ethical value in the Upanishads. It is not merely verbal veracity but more comprehensive integrity of mental attitude and practical conduct[13] It has been identified with supreme spiritual Reality.[14] Observance of truth marks spiritual and moral excellence of personality But it also implies a supremely altruistic and social attitude in life. Reverence is social in its profound regard for elders and teachers. Truth and Reverence imply such abundant altruism as can bestow immense peace and happiness upon society. Much evil occurs due to violation of these virtues Celebacy and penance are rather ascetic virtues which constitute personal discipline of a

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12 यान्यस्माक सुचरितानि तानि त्वयोपास्यानि । तैत्तिरीय उप० १-११

13 सत्यमिति अमायिता अकौटिल्यं वाङ्मन. कायानाम् ।
शांकरभाष्य प्रश्न उप०

14 ब्रह्म सत्यम् ।

spiritual aspirant But they imply considerable altruism and social good in their personal austerity. Sensualism and indulgence which are the opposite of these cause much evil in social life.

Ascetic virtues of penance, celebacy, renunciation etc. are apparently austere for one who observes them, but they are highly conducive to social good And so are the pacific virtues of peace and silence. Peace is a comprehensive virtue which ensures abundant personal and social good. Mental and spiritual peace is the basis of personal happiness and the root of social welfare. Evils, conflict and violence occurs from lack of peace. Much evil is caused by ill-speaking. Silence as a cultural and spiritual discipline can ensure much personal peace and social happiness



CHAPTER XXXV

# LACUNA IN ETHICAL VALUES IN THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are esoteric spiritual gospels They are neither social treatises nor ethical works They do not aim at propounding social principles of life or ethical doctrines Their motive is to discover the spiritual truth of life and to find the way for its realization They are the supreme gospels of spirituality and have prescribed an effective way for its realization. Social values found in the Upanishads are largely incidental to the natural social situation in which the sages lived. Ethical values found in the Upanishads are not merely incidental. They are seriously and intentionally asserted as schema of spirituality and as effective means of its realization As these ethical values have a definite spiritual motive they are deeply governed by it. The ethical discipline prescribed in the Upanishads is mainly intended to help an aspirant on his way to spiritual realization. As this realization is conceived as an individual and personal goal of life, though it is not individual in its character, the moral discipline prescribed as means for it is largely personal. It is dominantly ascetic, as personal asceticism is a necessary condition of spiritual realization Love of pleasure is antagonistic to it Hence social and hedonistic traits of ethical good, which are so dominant in western thought, are rather ignored in the ethics of the Upanishads Several other ethical values which are important in western ethics are also conspicuous by their absence in the Upanishads It is worthwhile to consider, not for criticising the Upanishads but only for defining the scope of their ethical thought as to which of the ethical values that are prominent in western thought are not duly appreciated in the Upanishads

Justice and courage are foremost among them in comparison

to Greek ethics. Love, service and [illegible] in contrast with Christian morality. [illegible] which are pillars of British ethics, are rather [illegible] Upanishads. Compassion, so cardinal to Buddhism and Vaishnavism, is also not so evident in the Upanishads, [illegible] plied in the ethics of the Isha Upanishad and [illegible] ted at one place in another Upanishad.[1] Rigorism [illegible] salism of Kantian ethics is also not contemplated in the Upanishads.

These are the main lacuna in ethical values [illegible] pounded in the Upanishads. They are to be [illegible] contrasting Upanishadic spiritualism with Western ethical thought, though these lacuna in Upanishadic ethics [illegible] intentional but occasioned by the limitations of the [illegible] of the sages and of the purpose of their speculation.

Justice is foremost among the cardinal virtues [illegible] in Greek ethics. Justice is a wide concept of ethical value. It is social, ethical and rational. Reason is a dominant [illegible] of Greek thought. Reason is the faculty of social [illegible] It is through reason applied to social situations that [illegible] tude takes the form of legal justice. Logic of life [illegible] in law. Justice is both fair and relentless, both considerate and cruel. It is impartial like intellect and reason. It [illegible] due to its impartiality. Benevolence is a liberal altruistic [illegible] It is motivated more by compassion and mercy than [illegible]

The rational or logical, the legal and the ethical [illegible] of the wide concept of justice are not clearly distinguished in Indian usage. The three aspects are fused [illegible] by a common term known as Nyaya. Nyaya [illegible] of Indian philosophy. Nyaya also signifies legal [illegible] ethical idea of justice is not so prominent in Indian [illegible]

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1 [illegible] न लिप्यते । ईश उप. [illegible]

Neither the term nor the idea occurs in the Upanishads. Faint glimpses of it appear in Yajnavalkyas intention to divide his wealth equally between his two wives[2] or in the maternal compassion of the wife of a sage towards a young disciple fasting in protest to the teacher's refusal to impart him final knowledge.[3] But the emphatically ethical idea of justice is conspicuous by its absence in the Upanishads.

And so is the Greek concept of courage. Like justice, the word courage also does not occur in the Upanishads Moral and intellectual courage was not much appreciated in Indian tradition The emphasis on obedience to parents and preceptors is the reason that explains this fact. There are examples of bold inquirers and courageous disputants in the Upanishads, yet courage, in its specific socio-ethical context is not highlighted in the Upanishads. Though the actual conduct of people, particularly the Kshattriyas, is glorified for characteristic courage evidenced in protection of people particularly women, yet the idea of courage as a moral virtue is not so distinctly recognised in Indian thought as it is done in Western thought No examples of Copernican courage can be found in Indian tradition The idea of courage as modified by Green also is not prominent in Indian tradition, except in modern times under the influence of Western thought. The fearless courage of the revolutionaries is the nationalized version of Rajput gallantry, and the Gandhian courage of civil disobedience was a mild dilution of real courage encouraged by the liberality of British administration.

Love, service and vicarious suffering are the cardinal doctrines of Christian religion. Thay are preached in the gospels and exemplified in the life of the Christ and Christian fathers Several saints have set notable examples of human love and of servi-

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2 बृह० उप० २-४

3 छा० उप० ४-१०-२

ce to and suffering for those who call for it in their misery and plight Many Christain fathers have spent their lives among lepers and other suffering people Red Cross Society is a gignatic modern institution inspired by the Christian doctrine of love and service.

No such doctrine, conduct or institution is to be noted in Indian thought and tradition Spiritual discipline has a distinctly personal and individual bias general altruism is no doubt intended in it bnt no tendency towards a concorete tradition of social love and human service is associated with it

There is no mention of Love and Service in the Upanishads. The very terms are conspicuous by their absence in the Upanishads, as are justice and courage The spiritual principle of love is enunciated in the spiritual oneness of people and consequent non-hatred in the Isha Upanishad[4] but the concrete human love is neither propounded in theory nor is it illustrated by concrete conduct like that of Christian fathers many of whom lived among the sick and suffering and served them Even love as a human sentiment is not indicated in the Upanishads though the Upanishadic sages lived with their family A sharp suggestion of the spiritual secret of love is to be found in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad where Yajnavalkya reveals to his wife that things and relations are not dear for their own sake but for the non-dualistic spirit which underlies them[5]

But it is regrettable that the spiritual principle of love, which is so deeply and profoundly understood in the Upanishads, could not be worked out as the concrete mode of social life in them It could not be possible due to secluded and unsocial life of sages and also due to their abstract and individualistic ap-

4 यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति । ईश० उप० ६

5 आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वप्रिय भवति । बृह० उप०

proach to spiritual discipline Nor could, for the same reason, service of man be established as a concrete means of spiritual salvation The concrete Vedic culture embodies human love and co-operation But service is not highlighted even there. Love is lost in the abstract and ascetic discipline of Upanishads Service is neglected due to the individual and unsocial attitude of the mode of life and discipline highlighted in the spiritual tradition of Upanishads It is regrettable that with the back-ground of living and concrete Vedic culture, the profound and marvellous spiritualism of the Upanishads could not find its expression in a doctrine of human love and a tradition of social service.

Vicarious suffering for others is a remarkable doctrine of Christian religion It is not only unknown in Indian tradition, but it is also inconceivable in view of the ethical individualism of human responsibility and human suffering Indian ethos became utterly individualistic after the Vedic period in which alone we find a collective sense in people The Vedic people prayed and worshipped collectively for common good, as is indicated by the plural pronouns of Vedic hymns (Nah, vah) After the Vedic period, the collectivism of Vedic culture declined and individualism established itself in Indian life, perhaps due to the individualism of agriculture Ethical individualism is evident in the Upanishads The law of Karma becomes the law of life with its two-fold effect in the form of individualism and fatalism Every one is responsible for his own deeds and he assumes future births according to them Man becomes bad by evil deeds and assumes bad life in future birth as a result of them [6] Some individualism is essential to life and ethics But excessive individualism leaves no room for altruism which is cardinal to ethics Altruism also

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6 रमणीय-चरणा रमणीया योनिमापद्यन्ते कपूयचरणा कपूया योनिमापद्यन्ते । छा० उप० ५-१०-७

is 'good' for one's own sake But it is anomalous to look egoistically at altruism Faith in absolute good and devotion to good as service of God elevates both egoism and altruism implied in moral conduct Such an attitude is encouraged in Gita and later Indian theism It is ethically better than the implicit arrogance of vicarious suffering But neither vicarious suffering nor good as service of God is to be found in the Upanishads. Spiritual aspiration and moral conduct both seem to be governed by a rigid individualism, except for some Vedic remnants of co-operative inquiry for exploring the spirit, and of common endeavour for its realization

The fatalism of the law of Karma further confirms this ethical individualism of the Upanishads. The mode of rebirth of a man is determined by his past deeds and at least so far his present life is limited even in regard to actions of his present life. Complete determinism is neither logically convincing nor ethically acceptable, yet there is a strong strain of determinism in the fatalism of Karma Freedom of will is not argued in the Upanishads either as an ethical necessity or as a logical implication of moral judgment as it is done by Kant in his famous argument "You can because you ought" Will is not mentioned in the Upanishads in the context of human action. Will is recognised in the form of cosmic will of Divine Being in the cosmological context of creation, but there is no reference to human will as the quality of human actions Human will seems to be implied in Upanishadic injunctions urging man to integrate objects and actions with spirituality,[7] and to strive for realization of spirit[8] Spiritual integration of objects and actions, and endeavour to realize the spirit require a transcendence of natural aptitudes Such transcendence cannot be possible without a strong ethical (and infact spiritual) will. But the fact and value of such a will is neither clearly recognised nor distinctly asserted in the Upa-

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7 ईशावास्यमिद सर्वम् । ईश उप० १

8 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तैत्तिरीय उप० ३-३-२

nishads The Karmayoga of the Isha Upanishad and the Bhagwadgita requires a highly developed spirituo-ethical will. The importance of such a will is perhaps nowhere emphasised in Indian thought. Though the Spiritual basis of moral will makes it a proud privilege of man, yet freedom of will is neither affirmed as a prerogative of man nor recognised as a postulate of ethics. The inclination of Indian thought and life is more towards determinism than towards freedom of will as is the inclination of Western thought and life Fatalism of Indian thought is also traced to the effects of agriculture as can be its individualism. The Katha Upanishad even likens the birth and death of man to the phenomenon of vegetation.[9] Fatalism and lack of emphasis on human will are greatly responsible, besides individualism, for the deplorable history of India during the Christian era

Ethical evil also is not duly recognised in Indian thought as also in the Upanishads Good and evil are relative terms of ethics They are like positive and negative poles of ethical life. It is difficult to conceive of one without its relation to the other. Absolute good may be the ultimate truth of absolutistic metaphysics like that of the Vedanta and of Bradley, but normal human good is understandable only in relation to evil. Evil is less individualistic than good Good may be aspired by individuals but evil needs to be supported by common will more than the good Individuals can will to do good, but are less capable of doing evil. Evil can more easily be perpetrated against disunited individuals by more organised groups The above differences between the nature of good and evil explains the difference of Indian attitude towards good and evil respectively and also the evil fate of India in history. As more disunited, Indians were less capable of evil against other peoples and were easier targets for aggression by other peoples. The above difference of attitude towards good and evil permeates the spirit of language in its earliest recesses. While there are several synonymous

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9 सस्यमिव मर्त्यः पच्यते सस्यमिव जायते पुनः । कठ० १-१-६

personal spiritual Being. It is a spiritual principle rather than a Spiritual Person. Even realization of Brahmanhood by an individual is conceived as his de-personalization. His individuality is liquidated in salvation like the identity of rivers merging in the ocean[11] So perhaps due to the impersonal character of the spiritual principle called Brahman, the Upanishads could not cultivate compassion as a human ethical virtue No reference to compassion is found in the Upanishads Compassion as a religio-ethical virtue is not exemplified in the view or conduct of any of the sages of the Upanishads In later works of Indian philosophy the patriarchal sages are depicted as deeply moved by compassion for disciples in the context of the worldly fate and prospective salvation of the latter But the widely human and ethical significance of compassion does not seem to have been duly appreciated in Indian philosophic tradition. The divine compassion of theistic philosophies of India also has not been worked down to human level God is glorified as supremely compassionate, but man has nowhere been urged to follow the example of God. The faith of Indian theism consists more in adoration of God than in living a life inspired by His divine virtues The compassion of Indian theism could not evolve social institutions of human service as Christian compassion led to the creation of a highly humanistic mission of service like the Red Cross Society. The medical service of Ramakrishna Mission is a late adaptation of Christian compassion It has no source in indigenous Indian faith The compassion of Jain and Buddhistic ahinsa was more of a negative abstenance from killing animals than a positive service to human beings Moreover it was emphatically confined to non-killing of animals. It was extended to human love and service of man by Mahatma Gandhi in modern times, largely under the influence of Christianity.

Lack of hedonism or utilitarianism of the British kind is ano-

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11 यथा न द्य स्यन्दमाना समुद्रे अस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूप विहाय ।

मु० उप० ३-२-८

ther notable feature of Upanishadic ethics Pleasure of the individual or worldly happiness of society is nowhere conceived as a desirable goal in the Upanishads The reason of this anti-hedonistic tone of Upanishads seems to be their ascetic inclination Individualistic strain of spiritual aspiration might have been the cause of neglect of the idea of common happiness in the Upanishads,[12] as transitory Wealth is deemed to be unsatisfactory.[13] Though secular value of food, sex, money etc are moderately appreciated in the Upanishads, yet they are severely restricted by a dominant asceticism and are never deemed to be desirable goals of human life Some statements of Upanishads smack of ascetism and urge renunciation. Moderation is the emphatic tone of the statements which urge spiritualization of secular values In fact it is only through moderation that spiritualization of secular values can be possible Greatest pleasure either of the individuals or the greatest good of the greatest number which forms the motto of British Utilitarianism is nowhere commended in the Upanishads or supported in later Indian thought This lacuna of Indian thought is not lamentable but commendable, as moderation and spiritualization of secular values is the only way to enduring happiness of human life against the nemesis of Hedonism and utilitarianism that is threatening human society and civilization

Formalistic Rationalism like that of Kant, is also not traceable in Indian thought in general or in the Upanishadic in particular Both Formalism and Rationalism are general theories of ethics inspired by the general character of reason Reason is deemed in the Upanishads to be inadequate for realization of spirit[14] Intellect and reason are dualistic and discursive, while spiritual Reality is integral and immediate Reason, as such,

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12 इन्द्रियाणा जरयन्ति तेज । कठ उप० १-१-२६

13 न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्य । कठ उप० १-१-२७

14 नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । कठ उप० १-२-९

pertains only to phenomenal categories of thought. It is only intellect chastened and mellowed by approximate vision of spirit that can be helpful in spiritual realization.[15] Reason may have some relevance to spiritual discipline in the form of contemplation of reality (known an manana), but it is not imagined to be a formal criterion of moral good as it is deemed to be in Greek and German ethics. Kant's Categorical Imperative is highly rational and formal, but even reasonable generality is not duly appreciated as a criterion of moral good in Indian thought. Generality of reason leads to a social view of ethics Individualism of Indian thought and life, precluded the possibility of application of reason to ethics in any considerable form. Indian ethics is largely personal and so is the spiritual discipline of the Upanishads It is in the Dharmashastras that the general character good has been visualised through reciprocity of human feeling. "One should not do to others what is unpleasant to oneself when done to him by others" Mahabharata defines concept of ethical duty[16] This generality of ethical duty is also not so impersonally rational It is also inspired by the personalistic conception of good and evil. Lack of reason in socio-ethical context has been responsible for failure of Indian people in developing a national character which could form a strong foundation of independent India

Some of the lacuna of Indian and Upanishadic thought are certainly lamentable Only some of them like anti-hedonism can be deemed to be commendable But most of them indicate severe omissions in Indian thought and explain deplorable failures of Indian people in social, political and historical spheres of national life

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15 बुद्धया शुभया संयुनक्तु । श्वे० उप० ४-४-१२

16 आत्मन प्रतिकूलानि परेषा न समाचरेत । —महाभारत

## CHAPTER XXXVI

# TRANSVALUATION OF ETHICAL VALUES

The foregoing description of Secular, Social and Ethical values, as they are found in the Upanishads, indicates the place and importance that is given to these values in the Upanishads The Upanishads are generally taken to be treatises of abstract spiritualism and are believed to ordain asceticism for spiritual realization. There is undoubtedly an emphasis on the transcendental character of spirit in the Upanishadic metaphysics, and the ethical discipline required for spiritual realization also inclines towards asceticism The independent importance of secular modes of life is certainly not accepted in the Upanishads They are supported by the Supreme Spirit and are to be integrated with it in the Supreme ideal of life Realization of this integration is the highest fulfilment of life. So also the Upanishads do not encourage Hedonism or indulgence in sensory life or absorption in secular values They do allow a moderate enjoyment of sex and other modes of secular life, but they incline towards restriction of them for observing spiritual discipline intended to lead to spiritual discipline intended to lead to spiritual realization The Upanishads may not be extremely ascetic, but they do certainly incline towards asceticism in their view of spiritual discipline The secular values can be integrated with spiritual experience, but in themselves they tend towards duality which is opposite of spirituality Hence they are to be strictly restricted Asceticism is only a restriction of secular values It is necessary for integration of these values with spiritual realization

Restriction of secular values and their integration of with delightful spiritual experience is the only way of personal salvation of man and also of social happiness Civilization has erred in the direction of unrestricted development of material means

of life and has encouraged unregulated indulgence in sensory pleasures. It has made human life externally glorious and physically more comfortable and even more pleasant But inner peace and happiness of man have reduced with the unrestricted development of civilization in the secular direction The intention of Upanishadic spiritualism is not that secular values should be renounced and asceticism should be adopted as a way of life. The place and importance that the Upanishads give to secular values confirm that they are not abhorrent of secular values On the other hand they duly recognise the importance and value of secular modes of life But the Upanishads undoubtedly demand a restriction of secular values in personal life and a regulation of sensory enjoyment, in order that integration and consequent elevation of them with delightful spiritual experience may be possible Secular abundance and sensory excess are not consistent with spiritual experience which alone can ensure inner peace and healthy happiness to human society An ascetic inclination of our attitude to life is the only assurance of our advancement towards the supreme spiritual goal of life It is only in this spiritual goal that mankind can find highest fulfilment of life and man can find supreme salvation of his mundane existence.

The secular values are more naturalistic. Hence they are more deterministic and more individualistic. Therefore it is more difficult to integrate them with spiritual experience which is deeply non-dualistic and therefore consists in transcendence of individuality, dualism and determination. Severe restriction of secular values and strong regulation of sensory pleasures is the only way to reconcile mundane existence of man with his inner aspirations and his spiritual destiny.

The social and ethical values afford modes of human life through which restriction of secular values and regulation of sensory pleasures can be possible, and can thus pave the way to spiritual enlightenment Duality, individuality and determination are reduced in social and ethical modes of life, and man

advances and unwittingly towards spiritual non-duality They afford an effective schema of spirituality in human life, through which modes of life can be integrated with Supreme Spiritual Reality that is also supreme value Sex and maternity are natural modes of life which form a natural bridge to connect the realms of natural life with that of spirit It seems as if the spirit seeks self-realization in mundane existence through them Sex unites two indivduals of mature age into a physical non-duality which can promote spiritual non-duality through sensory pleasure and mental concommitants of copulation Sex is a double link of cultural life; it links secular values with social values and links the latter with the spiritual values through ethical schema The mutuality of sex marks natural transcendence of duality and individuality. On one hand, sex seems to mark the acme of impassioned determination, and on the other hand it can become, by moral restraint and spiritual regulation effected through conjugal love, a supreme schema of correlating mundane existence with Supreme Spiritual reality This promise of sex is symbolized in the mythical ideal of Shiva-Parvati.

While copulation of two mature persons exalts the natural instinct of sex to spiritual altitude, through the super-conscious, integral and ecstatic delight and transcendence of duality and duration with it, maternity correlates it with duration transformed into a tradition of generation in human life and with difference of ages (between the parents and children) and also with various social relations which follow from maternity. Sex forms of schema of spirituality for the couple, and maternity constitutes a mode of spirituality in the context of other social relations that follow from maternity

This is the motive with which sex has been exalted to spiritual altitudts in the myth of Shiva-Parvati, and motherhood has been adored in various modes of Indian tradition. Sex and maternity not only open the ways of integrating natural instincts with spirituality, but they also afford principles of elevation of other secular values of food, wealth, action, intellect

etc to spiritual altitudes and of their integration with supreme spiritual value By such elevation and integration the secular values, which are the root of discord in life, become the instruments of accord and unity. The bones of contention become the means of concord and compathy which promote our progress towards the Spiritual goal of life.

Sex and maternity form the natural foundations of social life Sex embraces a couple into ecstatic union and tends to extend through maternity, into wider social formations One family multiplies into clans and tribes, which have grown to form wider society Sex inspires one-dimensional social relationship. But maternity multiplies dimensions of social relationships into a large variety which has been endowed with unique significance particularly is the tradition of Living Culture of India. These unique dimensions of social relations are signified in Indian tradition by specific words the like of which, at least in such a wide variety, do not perhaps exist in any other language of the world The novelty and delight, which are important characteristics of Spirit, find rich modes of their expression in these specific social relations

Social relationship affords a situation in which natural duality and determination tend to reduce and to promote thereby non-duality and delight Social transcendence of duality, egoism and selifshness, inculcates freedom and delight through moral will, which appears in human life as a challenge to natural determination The elevation of sex to spiritual altitudes and integration of spirituality with social relations also becomes possible only by virtue of moral self-determination which implies free dom of will as a subjective virtue and regulation of secular values as a function of moral will Sex and maternity afford a natural motivation for spiritual elevation and advancement of life Social relations which follow from maternity create a situation in which this spiritual elevation and advancement of life can be possible But moral will is the cardinal principle by

which this spiritual elevation and advancement can be effected
in actua life

Morality or ethical value is the cardinal schema through
which natural existence can be correlated with spiritual being
Altruism is the crucial principle by which this correlation is
brought about in the social situation of human life. Altruism is
the essence of ethical will, as without it morality loses all its
meaning by becoming identical with natural life, as it has hap-
pened in Greek Epicureanism and British Hedonism Altruism
implies a spiritual identification with the interests of others and
a voluntary willing of acts that are conducive to those interests.
Ethical Altruism implies a transcendence of natural dualism
and individualism of life. It is by and through this transcen-
dence that ethical altruism rises to the frontiers of spirituality.
Natural phenomena of sex and maternity afford a natural mo-
tive for initial altruism, through delight of organic copulation
and general creation This initial altruism also is not without
the inspiration of moral will tending towords approximation
with spirituality It is to be cultivated, elevated, & strenghthene
by an enduring ethical will Then only it will form a strong sch-
ema of richer moral life and deeper spirituality

It is in this cultivation of moral will and its refinement into
a strong schema of spirituality that the meaning of human life
consists The deeply ascetic moral and spiritual discipline em-
phasised in the Upanishads is intended to confirm and consoli-
date socially altruistic and personally excellent ethical virtues
as concrete embodiments of good and they constitute the cha-
racter i e. ethical being of man Good is an integral dimension of
Reality as is signified by the complex meaning of the word 'Sat'
which signifies both 'being' and 'good'. Hence morality is the
closest approximation to Reality It may not be the whole of
Reality, as Beauty and Bliss are two more important dimen-
sions of Reality, yet from the point of view of common and prac-
tical human life and good is an essential and important schema
of spirituality.

The moral good is generally understood with reference to moral will which implies conation as the power of motivation and individuality as a necessary pole of reference of exercise of will by man as a moral agent Exercise of moral will and the idea of moral responsibility are taken to imply both moral conation and ethical agentship These are found to present fundamental anomalies in spiritual philosophy and ethics in connection with their reconciliation with the transcendent character of spiritual reality It is on account of these fundamental anomalies that Shankar refused to accept the causal relation of moral actions with spiritual realization He has the sanction of the Upanishads for his adamance on this point. The Upanishads declare clearly that the eternal spiritual reality cannot be attained my moral actions[1] which are ephemeral[2]. Actions are a process in the durational course of time, while spiritual reality is transcendent of time.

Moral activity can be reasonally reconciled with and axiologically related to spiritual realization, as conducive to it, only on the ground allowed by the Upanishadic statements which, while clearly asserting transcendental character of spiritual Reality, do evidently recognise the dynamic dimension of it The Isha Upanishad describes the spiritual Reality as dynamic i e as expressing one dimension of it in the form of activity.[3] Other Upanishads speak of divine will as the creative force behind the evolution of the world from supreme spiritual Being[4] But it is to be clearly understood that the dynamics of the spirit is neither determinate nor determining It is a spontaneous expression of the sportive and delightful free-will of the Supreme Being No

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1 नास्त्यकृत कृतेन । मु॰ उप॰ १-२-११

2 न ह्यध्रुवै. प्राप्यते तद् ध्रुवम् । कठ उप॰ १-२-१०

3 तदेजते । ईश उप॰ ५

4 तदैक्षत । छा॰ उप॰ ६-२-३

constraint or deliberation which characterizes common human action can be ascribed to it Common human personality suffers from a negative dimension in the form of lack of abundance of spiritual being Hence it strives to approximate to spiritual reality by exercise of moral will through constraint and deliberation Spiritual Reality is positive and abundant Hence there is no occasion in it for constraint and deliberation through which human moral will operates Divine will is the spontaneous expression of abundance of Being and Bliss of the Spiritual Reality.

Nor can individuality as a category involving duality be ascribed to Spiritual Reality or its spontaneous creative will. Divine Will is a principle of Spiritual Reality and not a phenomenon like human will which implies individuality as presupposition of ethical agentship.

Individuality is a subjective reflection of objective duality which characterizes the phenomenal content of empirical knowledge Knowledge, as a relation that involves a subject and an object, is bipolar phenomenon of human life But duality of phenomenal poles of subject and object is not the ultimate reality. It is not applicable to integral blissful experience which is the context of spiritual reality The latter is described as non-dualistic as it transcends the strict and effective duality of subject and object It is integrity of Blissful Being It is misleading to render this non-duality as Monism. Monism is an attempt at rendering in intelligible rational and empirical terms the integral and mystical Spiritual Reality which can be realized only in actual integral experience How the objects and persons are related to ultimate Spiritual Reality and what is their place in it can be actually understood only in final Spiritual experience Some analogical approximations of this state of Spiritual realization can be useful by their suggestive indications, but serious intellectual efforts at rendering that state of experience in rational terms result only in misreprtsenting non-dualistic spiritualism in confusing theories like that of Monism

Monism is an attempt to render Spiritual Reality in ontological terms of empirical understanding guided by dualistic intelltct and relational reasoning. Monism is conceived by contrast with pluralistic ontology. Actually monism is logically related to pluralism as its counterpart Metaphysical monism is a re-ification of an intellectual abstraction in the form of an unitary ontological being, which is, in fact, rationally inconceivable The negative designation of non-dualism for Spiritual Reality indicates the caution and modesty of spiritualistic sages of India with which they avoided the arrogance of venturing upon a positive characterization of the thecry of Spiritual Reality. It was with the same modesty that they endeavoured themselves and advised their disciples to realize the non-dualistic spiritual Reality in actual integral experience.

It is in the light of a modest of Spiritual Reality as indicated above that we can understand with some propriety the limitations of empirical understanding and intellectual reasoning in regard to the nature of Spiritual Reality and the value and validity of Social and moral approximations to Spiritual experience in concrete human life It is in the light of the same view that the real significance of free will and individuality in the moral context and also with regard to the contribution of morality to Spirituality can be reasonably understood Individuality is taken as a necessary implication of human existence and moral conduct Individual is the agent of moral action. He is required to be held responsible for good and to be accused for evil As an agent of moral action he is credited with a free-will It is with the assumption of freedom that he is held responsible for his action Freedom of will is a necessary postulate of ethics, and individuality is a necessary implication of moral freedom and ethical responsibility. Ego is the name given to this hypothetical individuality when it is taken to be conscious of itself. Ego is self-conscious individuality which reflects in a distinction of its being from the being of other subjective and objective entities

But freedom of will, individuality and ego are not such ontological actualities as they are believed to be Ego and individuality are merely functional phenomena of human life, which are imagined to be ontological entities on the analogy of physical identity of external objects The ideas of the subjective and objective entities obtain in the bipolar phenomenon of human knowledge They are implied in empirical knowledge as necessary poles of reference and understanding Infact even physical objects do not possess a stable and an enduring identity as human understanding would require them to possess Intellectual analysis of the kind sponsored by Buddhism can reveal the changing character of objective being, Phenomenal knowledge is false at least in so far as it requires to rest on a stable object having an enduring identity Its falsity is exposed by rational philosophies which are more reasonable than common understanding which assumes a stable object

Human individuality is an assumption in which objective bias of human understanding is reflected in a subjective context The same human understanding which requires a stable object assumes, as if by an implicit analogical reasoning, a subjective entity which reflects in phenomenal consciousness as self-conscious Ego Individuality and ego are re-ifications of an abstraction required for maintaining and explaining the phenomenon of empirical knowledge Both the object and the subject are the outcome of the polarization of the phenomenon of knowledge. Neither can be maintained as enduring ontological beings in the form in which they are required and assumed in common understanding Philosophical understanding also, so far as it is influenced by empirical predilection of understanding, deludes itself in these assumptions But a deeper reasoning dispels this delusion of human understanding.

In fact individuality and ego are as much functional phenomena as are external objects The 'I' which signifies the Ego is a linguistic symbol which does not denote even such a phenomenal identity as do the terms used for objects Relatively the

identity of objects is more stable than that of the subjective Ego Subjective Ego is a more swiftly changing phenomenon than the object. And for that very reason of swift change it appears to be more stable in regard to its identity. It is like the illusion of a fiery-circle or a fastly spinning top in which the swiftly changing subjective ego takes itself to be an unchanging entity because it is even less capable of apprehending its own unstable being. Curiously enough, individuality and ego are perhaps consequences of a self-contradiction involved in the very nature of the cognitive subject. The contradiction is not confined merely to its failure in coping with the speed with which it is changing; it also extends to its determination of objectivity, dominates in the empirical being of man and on account of which he suffers from a secret predilection towards surrendering his being to objectivity as it has been indicated by modern existentialism in a different context.

On account of this predilection towards objectivity, the abstract and hypothetical ego seeks to identify itself with some objective content and thus assume a concrete being. This illusion, called Adhyasa or super-imposition by Shankara, operatts as a continuous and contingent phenomenon of life and maintains the fluctuating and illusory identity of man's egoistic existence. The objective identification becomes necessary in the conscious life of man due to the inner emptiness of consciousness. Consciousness is objective by its nature and internally empty of content. It has no inner content. The only inner and continuous content of consciousness (in the form of superconscious) is Delight or ananda. Delight, in an implicit form, sustains the existence of man and maintains his phenomenal and conscious life But when Delight is not duly realized, as it happens in ordinary life, identification with objective content becomes necessary for ego in order to give a concrete form and a semblance of continuity to its existence This continuity and identity of both the subjective and objective being is illusory, though this illusion is mysteriously sustained on one side by

underlying spiritual Delight and is on the other hand entertained by the inexplicably confused character of human existence and consciousness Consciousness is, in fact, a contingent phenomenon which assumes the form of stream within the ocean of Delightful Spiritual Reality Cognitions are like series of waves which are in reality supported by the waters of Delightful Spiritual Reality which alone is the continuous Reality by virtue of its Delightful infinity and abundance Supported by Delightful spirit consciousness assumes an appearance of continuity in correlation to and illusory identification with the object The phenomenon of self-conscious subjective individuality which expresses itself as ego-consciousness, is generated in this confusion through interaction of intellect with the object The intellect in Indian cosmology is a mysterious phenomenon which forms a strange link between Superconscious Delightful Spiritual Reality and the world of conscious and objective existence Intellect, somehow, reflects Superconscious Delight in the form of impersonal consciousness and filters in the form of individualistic Ego which reflects in a two-fold illusion of subjective and objective order to provide a content to its inner emptiness Consciousness and dualistic knowledge is a bipolar phenomenon of human life which reflect in a two-fold illusion of subjective and objective identity But both the illusions are functional and not final truths of life They are not to be taken as reflections of Reality or as representing any real dimension of it, like moral goodness and free-will

The cognitive Ego is more devoid of inner content of spiritual Delight than the ethical ego which is formed not merely in course of cognition of an external object but in the event of willing a good act and concurrent identification of one's self as agent of good act Good act is essentially altruistic and implies an extension of inner being of man by its identification with the interest of others. Altruistic ethical ego is a phenomenon of a higher order than merely cognitive ego or self-seeking ego or negative ego which asserts itself in evil actions. Altruistic ethical

ego is conative ego By virtue of its dynamic nature and also on account of willing non-dualistic altruistic good it represents a real dimension of spiritual reality. It is the least illusory of all other modes of ego, and when freed to the utmost degree of remnants of individualistic egoism by humility and surrender to God, it becomes a supreme schema of spirituality in human life. Dynamics and goodness are real dimensions of spiritual Reality and they bestow upon altruistic ethical will a close kinship with reality Self-seeking ego, seeking its realization in egoistic hedonism and negative ethical ego asserting itself in evil acts, are fraught with duality and contraction of being They are also deeply, though not completely, devoid of inner content of Spiritual Delight The keener consciousness and stronger assertion of these two modes of ego are due to a greater contraction of being urged by more profound inner emptiness and also due to consequent greater urgency of illusory assertion As all consciousness involves emptiness of inner content and privation of Spiritual Delight, keener consciousness involves a greater privation of Spiritual Delight and indicates deeper estrangement of it from Delightful Spiritual Reality Negative ethical ego is generated in opposition to others and expressed in hostile and evil deeds The conflict of opposition makes consciouness keener and hardens the ego more by greater contraction. It also empties the ego-consciousness more deeply by deeper alienation and duality involved in it Vanity is an example of projection of deeper emptiness of inner being and of greater urgency of illusive being. The abstract and unreal character of ego is exposed more in the negative ego

All ego is an abstract identification of human existence with non-being, which is necessitated by the privation of positive delightful being exemplified in cognition and more sharply in evil action. Altruistic ethical ego is more positive by virtue of the non-dualistic spirituality and the grace of spiritual delight deserved with and by virtue of it This kinship of altruistic good with Délightful Spiritual Reality is the secret of the Delight

of good actions which the humble and good alone can enjoy in their experience The delight of good actions expresses in its greater purity when the ethical ego seems to liquidate in humility and surrender to God, contrasted with the arrogance of agentship Ethics seems to mingle with Religion on these high horizins of non-dualistic experience.

Thus ego and individuality which is presupposed in ethical agentship is not an ontological entity, but only a functional phenomenon of practical and ethical life. It appears as a contingent phenomenon in life and takes form with age gradually after the birth of the child The idea of ego as an entity is a reflection of objective entity (which also is phenomenal) So also the idea of retention of individuality in salvation or spiritual realization is merely a continuation of the idea of individuality assumed in life and its conduct It is projection of a falsehood in the sphere of ultimate truth As this individuality is not an ontological entity but merely a phenomenal concretization of a functional mode of life, the idea of its retention in spiritual realization is irrelevant to spiritual truth of life. It is only under the illusion of this functional reality of ego that its retention is demanded and its merger in wider spiritual reality is questioned or demanded to be explained to the satisfaction of a person acting under this illusion, as for example in case of the figure of river and ocean used in the Mundaka Upanishad

What is dissolved and merged in the ocean of spirit is this phenomenal and illusory identity of individuals It is only melting of a misty illusion of life in the sunlight of spiritual enlightenment It is a negative treatment of an illusory individuality according to Vedantic metaphysics Positively persons and objects are illumined by the transcendental glory of spirit The flight of spirit permeates and saturates both, even as fiery light permeates an iron-ball The analogy is a highly significant representation of the Advaitic non-duality of spiritual enlightenment, so far as it can be represented in words and concepts The

monism of Advaita is to be understood not on the analogy of physical unity of existence. The analogy of fiery iron-ball explains it as a non-duality of fire and iron-ball. Spirit is the principle of Reality and not a physical fact or object, so as to be understood as an empirical unity. What appear as objects the subjects are phenomena to be illumined by non-dualistic spirit The subjective individual is not an ontological entity but a phenomenal and functional unity generated in life in course of concrete manifestation of non-dualistic spirit in the form of parental love. The subjective individuality formed as a phenomenal and functional principle of life is expanded into a wider spiritual (non-dualistic) being and sustained by the latter in the course of life The objective individuality is not ontologically negated in spiritual enlightenment but it is axiologically transcended in it and is transformed in its transvaluation even as the iron-ball is transformed into a veritable ball of fire.

So also the phenomenal subjective identity of the individual is not negated in spiritual enlightenment but transformed in spiritual transvaluation As the objects may remain as ontological facts in spiritual transvaluation, so also individuality may continue as a functional and phenomenal entity; only its axiological status is transformed in the spiritual experience Such axiological transformation of ego and individuality is more clearly underlined in the submission of theistic devotion. But it will be maintained even in the Advaitic experience in the state of jivan-mukti The analogy of the river and ocean also is not intended to affirm annihilation of individual being, but expansion of individuality in spiritual experience. The rivers also are not substantively lost in the ocean, but they are only expanded in being These figures only figuratively indicate the transcendental spiritual experience to the utmost extent that it is possible in language and thought. The actual truth of it is to be realized in actual experience of delightful abundance of being, through the ways suggested by the sages It is only in the experience that the real truth of spirit will be revealed to man, who in the expe-

rience will be a man experiencing an immortal abundance of delightful being and also be living human life with highest excellence

Altruistic moral will also signifies greater moral freedom. Freedom is the opposite of determination Altruism is a deeper conquest of determination as natural man is strongly disposed towards selfishness Greater transcendence of determination marks the greater freedom implied in altruistic moral will. Freedom is also an integral dimension of Delightful Spiritual Reality Delight expresses in freedom which signifies an excess of being over the adequacy of determination and other modes of natural being like cognitive consciousness, thought etc Freedom of will is a logical implication of moral situation. It is postulate of ethics assumed to justify moral responsibility implied in moral judgement Individual is deemed to be the agent of moral action, thus ego is imagined to be implied in moral action. All ego is a product of illusory identification The influence of cognitive consciousness and negative ethical conation expressing in evil and consequent inner emptiness of being tend to reflect as ethical ego even in the context of good actions The residues of negation, which are hard to overcome and eliminate, urge this extension of illusion of ego to a sphere which is not its real jurisdiction Freedom of will in itself is a dimension of Divine Delightful Reality. It is a spontaneous expression of its abundance of Being Moral freedom of an ethical agent, in case of good actions, is akin to it The less it is associated with the idea of agentship and egoism, the closer it is to Spiritual Reality. Evil acts are not so much free acts as they are determined by the natural predilections and prejudices of the agent. The illusory ego is more assertive in evil acts Man as an individual agent commits only evil The good, directed by free evil, is not so much to the credit of his individual agentship, as it is to the credit of non-duality which he inherits and incorporates in his being Freedom alongwith Goodness is a dimension of spiritual Reality. Altruistic good is also spiritual in so far as it is non-dualis-

tic and transcends duality in its agent's identification with the interest of others Hence freewill is not to be attributed to individual as a moral agent It is more of an expression of dissolution or transcendence of individuality in the ethical and even aesthetic (as delightful) expansion of being. It is in non-dualistic identification of interest with others that good is willed and done. The greater is the good embodied in good will, the lesser is the feeling of agentship This is why great saints, great poets and great leaders represent their acts as directed by God's will. Such faith implies a surrender of individuality of being to God Freedom in such a situation can be better understood as spontaneity. The less is the element of constraint and deliberation, the more does freedom approximate to spontaneity. Divine freedom is integral and immediate like Divine Delight. In fact freedom is a spontaneous expression of Delight Hence it is likened to sport and divine creation is deemed to be Lila or the sport of Divine Being Deliberation is oscillation due to imperfection of man, characterized by negation of being by cognitive consciousness, ethical evil and consequent duality. It is necessitated by confusion of freewill and forces of determination

Freedom of will is a transcendental truth of life. It is a dimension of Reality expressed in the phenomenon of moral action As Reality is spiritual i e non-dualistic and delightful. Only altruistic and non-dualistic actions are to be treated as motivated by real free will Other actions which are dominantly selfish and dualistic are not truly moral actions. They are dominantly determined by egoistic nature. Though really deterministic, they are confused with moral actions motivated by free will. Moral responsibility for such actions is a rational and legal assertion of social adjustment of consequences of such acts Freedom of will in such cases is rather hypothetical than real, something which, though not really there, is to be assumed if any moral judgment is passed on acts and which is really present as a motivating force behind good acts Goodwill is the only free will as good and volition are both dimensions of reality Evil is not

really ethical in its character It is natural and determinate. It is assumed to be negatively ethical for social adjustment of evil reflecting in moral judgment Actually all evil is determinate action hypothetically attributed to moral will which is not present behind evil What is called deliberation in evil acts is also a determination, attributed by the subject and judges as deliberation to the subject of evil act The absence of freedom of will in case of evil acts can be easily discovered by contemplating about the possibility of abstenance from evil or resisting it. Moral freedom consists not only in doing an act, but it is also to be tested, particularly in case of evil, in abstaining from an act How irresistibly evil overwhelms the agent is observed and experienced by every man The irresistible obsession of evil proves its violently determinate character Ethical freedom can be assumed, in case of evil, only for assigning responsibility of evil on the agent and for according punishment to him, for social adjustment of evil Only apparent evil which is resorted to for defensive purpose or for corrective action for social good which also is ultimately defensive reaction against some earlier evil, that can be attributed to free will

As good and volition are dimensions of reality, freedom of will can be affirmed as the motive force behind good acts Good and freedom as willing good (and not evil) can also be reconciled wit freedom of spiritual realization. Spiritual realization is taken to be a state which is beyond good and evil It is certainly beyond relativity of good and evil As evil is determinate and it is not governed by ethical free will, it can have no place in spiritual realization characterized by spiritual freedom As a selfish person cannot do good, so a spiritual person can do no evil and it is gross misunderstanding of spirituality to accuse the liberated ethical license The liberated can only do good as good is akin to spirit The good done by the realized person is not so much deliberate or deliberated as it is free The freedom of the realized person is neither deliberative nor relational, but it is spontaneous It is an expression of delightful abundance of spi-

ritual being. Ethical freedom becomes delightful spontaneity in spiritual realization. The ethical ideal becomes the actual truth of life

Freedom of will, understood in the ethical sense of an exercise of self-determination by man as a moral agent, is an intermediate schema between spiritual spontaneity and natural determination Human existence is a complex or a confusion of the two Freedom is the expression of the spiritual dimension which underlies man's existence The character and qualities of man's moral freedom depend on the degree of spirituality that he has developed in his life The greater is the degree of spirituality the greater will be the spirit of spontaneity in his moral will and lesser will be the effect of natural determination and consequently there will be lesser deliberation Spontaneity is only perfection of freedom which is attained by spiritual excellence. Ethics, as a philosophy of human conduct, understands moral freedom in a relative sense and regards conflict of motives and deliberation as necessary conditions of moral will. Such a view is quite reasonable so far as it concerns life of man as it happens to be in the conflict of existence. But the goodness of life is not exhausted in this relativity. If spiritual advancement is taken to be a higher truth of life, greater and greater development of spontaneity and more and more dissolution of individuality is to be accepted as a sign of this development It is true that conflict and deliberation add, in a way, to the quality of moral will. It is also true that the conflict will not always be between the spiritual and the natural or between the altruistic and the egoistic. It may also happen between two or more altruistic motives, that is between two equally commendable situations as it happened in the life of Rama several times. Spontaneity can be developed to such an extent by cultivation of spirituality that the conflict and deliberation may be considerably reduced in such cases But a more common conflict in moral life occurs between the altruistic and egoistic interests In such conflict greater spontaneity is certainly

a sign of greater moral excellence This spontaneity of moral will marks a highly valuable schema of human life which links life with Spiritual Being. Such spontaneity is attained by overcoming egoistic obssessions of natural determinations which basically identify human life with animal existence, and by developing delightful altruism through appreciating spiritual non-duality and by identifying with the interests of others thereby. Ultimately spiritual non-duality is the cardinal principle of morality understood in human and whole-some sense

The above elucidation of a spiritual view of ethics and morality indicates that the ethical concepts of Ego, Individuality Freedom of will, Agentship etc are not be taken strictly in their popular sense, which is also the sense in which ethical philosophies use them The spiritual view of ethics elucidated above endeavours to explain how the empirical limits of these concepts are not rigid and final It also shows how these concepts, in their higher modes, touch the horizons of spirituality and seem to melt into a wider and deeper spiritual existence The contraction and duality of ego and individuality seem to reduce and, the concepts expand into a wider and richer being which is experienced as a glorious fact of spiritual advancement The conflict and constraint, which characterize the quality of moral will, also seem to relax into a social harmony with others promoted by spiritual non-duality

Ethical values, particularly those appreciated in the Upanishads, will appear in such a view of ethics, as highly approximating to spirituality and as veritable schema of spirituality adopted in Upanishadic disciple in order to relate the two fundamentally different regions of spirit and natural life The development of these schema in regard to their ethical excellence will, by greater spiritual transvaluation of ethical values, bring morality and life closer to Spiritual Being by maximization of their kinship and by minimizing the difference and distance between the two regions. The spiritual character of morality on one

side and greater spiritual approximation of virtues by moral excellence on the otherside, can show the utmost correlation of two realms of being inspite of the technical metaphysical difficulties emphasised by Shankara in conceiving of any real relation between them. The discrepancy between life and spirituality and the theoritical difficulty of correlating morality with spirituality may be intellectually insurmountable. But the spiritual basis of common life will certainly reveal its groundedness on spirit, and the greater approximation of moral excellence to spiritual Being will confirm the kinship of the former with the latter. This two-fold correlation of spirituality with common life and moral discipline can secure the value of life and morality in relation to the supreme spiritual goal to a considerable extent. There will, no doubt, remain an anomaly in the concurrence of common life and its spiritual basis, on one hand and a theoritical discrepancy in the approximation of morality with spirituality on the other hand. An evident confusion will be found to prevail in the concurrence of common life and its spiritual basis, and theoretically a leap will have to be admitted as the only course through which an aspirant can enter from the realm of morality into the realm of spirit. Such leaps may be inexplicable by reason, as they happen in a region beyond approach of reason but such leaps can be admitted as facts of spiritual life Some such leaps can be discovered in our cultural life also. With the idea of spiritual basis of common life on one hand and with ethical approximations to spirituality by moral excellence on the other hand, as elucidated in the view of Ego, Individuality, Agentship and Moral-will presented above, and in addition to these with the ideas of axiological leaps, the co-ordination of morality with spirituality may become reasonably convincing. It is only in such a co-ordination that the value of human life and spiritual endeavour may be ensured, and the possibility of spiritual attainment may be deemed to be encouraging.

The idea of transvaluation of ethical or of other values acquires meaning only in the light of such co-ordination Trans-

valuation of values is neither a nullification of intrinsic character of lower values, nor is it an easy approximation of lower values to higher values. With all the theoretical anomalies of rational reconciliation and with all the practical difficulties of concrete realization, such a transvaluation is the only course of axiological fulfilment of life

The idea of transvaluation of values has been elucidated to some extent in the previous chapters, particularly in regard to secular and social values as they are recognised in the Upanishads The question of transvaluation of values culminates in the idea of transvaluation of ethical values which will form the task of this concluding part of this positivistic study of the Upanishads Spiritual basis sustains secular, social and ethical value, yet the manifestation of spiritual principle exhibits in gradually increasing degrees in the modes of these values. Ethical values will be found to have the privilege of the grace of spirit in greater degree In fact it is by virtue of and through ethical values that secular and social values become amenable to spiritual transvaluation This affirms the supreme importance of ethical values both in cultural life and in spiritual discipline. The transvaluation of secular and social values also consists in their maximum spiritualization and it operates through the schema of ethical values The secular and the social values cannot approximate to spiritual reality without their intermediate schematization through ethical values which have a closer kinship with non-dualistic spirituality. Thus the transvaluation of secular and social values is to be understood and effected through ethical values which are, for this purpose, to be elevated in ethical excellence to utmost level so as to approximate most closely to spiritual Being and thus afford a strong ground to the aspirant for the inexplicable leap that he may be required to take in order to land in the veritable realm of Spirit

The transvaluation of ethical values also is to be understood in regard to the degree and quality of spiritual non-duality in-

corporated in them. The secular and social values also are to be examined in regard to the degree of duality that constitutes their limitation, and demands the excellence of the schema of ethical value in inverse proportion of the duality contained in these values The ethical values are by their very nature more non-dualistic than secular and social values. It is by virtue of their spiritual superiority that they have the privilege of working as intermediate schema for transvaluation of secular and social values.

The ethical values recognised in the Upanishads are to be distinguished according to their disciplinary and positive contributive value The Ascetic virtues have an obvious disciplinary value. They afford a negative safeguard against temptations of egoistic nature and also against possibilities of sensory excesses. Their negative contribution is highly valuable for attaining positive spirituality. The negative values form a defense-line between life of nature and the life of spiritual discipline. The positive virtues form a door-way between moral discipline and spiritual attainment.

Truth, which is the basic formula of moral and spiritual discipline constitutes a cardinal virtue of Upanishads, is also identified with Brahman, the Supreme Spiritual Reality[5] Truth in the form of verbal veracity, moral integrity etc. is rooted in spiritual non-duality and is opposed to narrow self-interest pursued with idea of duality Rectitude of conduct is necessitated more by consideration for altruistic interest than for self-interest. It is often the latter and can be possible only by a non-dualistic spiritual attitude in life Reverence is evidently a deeply other-regarding virtue Both the integrity of truth and the humility of reverence are profoundly spiritual. Besides implying non-duality and altruism, they are not merely rational but they are inspired by sincere spiritual sanctity and deep cardinal confi-

5 ब्रह्म सत्यम् ।

dence. Brahmacharya, as the very term signifies, is not mere regulation of sex, but it is cultural conduct more widely governed by spiritual non-duality. Even in the sense of celebacy, it is not entirely a personal discipline, but implies supreme regard for women. Celebacy is not enforcement of sexual restraint but a spiritual transcendence of an irresistible biological urge Tapas or penance is an ascetic virtue as it consists in denial of sensory pleasures of life. It is chastening for the person who undertakes it, but forbearance implied in Tapas reflects in social life in releasing means and pleasures of life for others, and thus in being conducive to social happiness. The social consequences of this supremely personal discipline are highly altruistic. Tapas, if observed even in a small measure by everyone, can ensure judicious distribution of means of life and bestow abundant happiness on society Renunciation also, if observed in a small measure by every one, can remove maldistribution of wealth, which has resulted from the opposite craze for self-aggrandisement

The pacific virtues of peace and silence seem to be personal and neutral but in fact they are not so. They are undoubtedly supreme personal disciplines which endow human personality with spiritual dignity, moral excellence and cultural grace But they reflect in abundance of social good which accrues from them Peace is not merely a personal virtue; it is also a supreme social value Social peace is the condition of all cultural values and is a supreme social value in itself. Most of the sufferings of human society are engendered in the course of disturbance of social peace Attainment of inner peace and expression of it in social life can promote all other goods of life Wars and other destructive deeds of social life are enacted in outer environment but they originate in the agitation (which is the opposite of peace) raging in the minds of men Revolutions are sudden outbursts of this agitation and represent violent efforts of society to secure peace. Peace and happiness, both in personal and social life, are largely disturbed by unnecessary and agitated eloquence Silence ensures not only personal peace, but also social

happiness, so far as the two are jeopardized by bitter, violent and wasteful speech

These ethical virtues, emphasised in the Upanishads, are essentially spiritual They imply a personal transcendence of lower and egoistic obsessions of life and ensure altruistic good. Non-duality implied in altruism is the dimension of spirituality which characterizes these virtues. The higher excellence of these virtues marks greater spirituality of them. Increase in their excellence can lead to their greater approximation to spiritual Reality; and with greater excellence, these can serve as stronger and more effective schema of transvaluation of social and secular values.

The dynamic, ritual, religious and social virtues also have altruistic and spiritual implications They also can be approximated to spirituality to a great extent by increasing their excellence and can be cultivated as valuable schema for transvaluation of social and secular values of life The dynamic virtues of action and ritual complement the pacific virtues of peace and silence Thus these virtues more fully represent, in concrete life, the dynamic and transcendent dimensions of spiritual Reality The dynamic dimension of Karma or action becomes incoherent with transcendent Reality only when in its natural determinate form it is dominated by one dimension of duration and causes contraction of man's being into egoism When action is inspired by altruism and non-duality it comprehends in its character the transcendent dimension of Reality and approximates more closely to Spiritual Reality. Such approximation to Reality constitutes the Spiritual transvaluation of action, which is the intention of the Isha Upanishad and the Bhagwadgita Such action is called Karmayoga in Gita. It transcends the egoistic, individualistic and deliberative limitations of ordinary action It approximates to divine action by spontaneity, freedom and delightfulness. Such action serves like the intermundane region between the earthly activism and heavenly transcendence of Spiritual Being.

The ritual actions seem to be more formal and selfish. They are actually so to some extent But ritual in its common and cultural form can be more easily transformed into spiritual action The commonness of its performance and of recitation of hymns that accompany it generates (or reveals) a spontaneous Spirituality through transcendence of individuality and egoism The integral harmony of collective music transforms the cooperative dynamics of ritual actions into an aesthetic harmony. Even more individualistic rituals can acquire a cultural dimension by musical co-operation of others & consequent introduction of non-duality in the form of ritual Such is the character of domestic rituals of child-birth marriage etc The moral, personal and individualistic observances also acquire a spiritual dimension in the ascetic attitude and disciplinary intention of them. Such is the character of religio-cultural observances called Vratas in Indian tradition Even though they are apparently personal, they become altruistic and spiritual in their intention and consequences

The religious virtues of faith, reverence, sanctity, divinity, worship, submission, service etc. comprehend an integral dimension of spirituality through holiness which constitutes the common flavour of all these virtuous flowers of adoration. All these virtues imply a transcendence not only of ego but of intellect also and acquire a spiritual dimension through this transcendence Faith and reverence signify a supreme regard for some person, duties, principles and values. The purity and integrity of faith and altruism and cordiality of reverence bestows a glory upon them by which they closely approximate to Spirituality. This close approximation of these virtues makes them alchemic schema of spirituality by which the steel-frame of life is transformed into a golden ornament of existence. The kinship of these virtues with spirituality makes them effective instruments of transvaluation of other values The divinization of

The raising of social relations to the status of divinity in the Upanishads and in the cultural tradition of India marks the spiritual altitudes to which the social dimension of life was elevated. It is in this elevation that sociality can form a valuable schema of spirituality and can correlate the latter with concrete life. Spirituality can scarely be attained in isolation, though solitary discipline may be an important means of it. Social and ethical altruism is not only a test of spirituality but it is also a mode of its concrete fulfilment in life.

Spirituality is characterized mainly by delight alongwith many other virtuous qualifications These qualifications are to be tested and fulfilled in social life. Incorporation of ethical altruism puts social life on the path of spirituality. Social altruism affords it an ethical content. Uniqueness of various social relations and specific dimensions of love bring it closer to spirituality. Spirituality consists in unique and enduring delight. The uniqueness of specific social relations affords a natural mode for spiritual uniqueness of delight This uniqueness forms a deep and strong cord between concrete life and transcendental spirituality Delight is revealed in life through ethical altruism and cultural uniqueness Natural selfishness is antagonistic to spiritual delight, though it may secure transitory sensory pleasures.

Sanctity and reverence which is developed in social relations in the Indian tradition, affords a cultural elevation and religious deepening to them and makes them more effective schema of spiritual realization Sanctity and reverence elevate and deepen the ethical altruism of social relations of life and transforms them into more approximate schema of transcendental spirituality Social relations incorporate secular values also and serve as a concrete media for spiritual transvaluation of them through ethical altruism Altruism, love sanctity and reverence inspire man to overcome duality, to transcend egoism and to deepen non-duality and facilitate the revelation of delightful spirituality in experience. The living social culture of India is the supreme

concrete mode of human life through which individual existence and social life both can ensure the highest and deepest enjoyment of spiritual delight in life and men can attain highest fulfilment of their earthly existence

As social values incorporate secular values in the concrete conduct of life, these also can acquire spiritual transvaluation through ethical altruism. Ethical altruism is a mental disposition, but it fulfils itself in concrete life through the media of secular values Secular values in themselves are strictly individualistic and are in so far antagonistic to both morality and spirituality. Moral good consists in altruism and spirituality expresses in non-duality Altruism signifies identification with the interest of others, which requires transcendence of egoism. Spiritual non-dualism evidently implies a transcendence of individuality and egoism. Altruism demands a limitation of secular values for self-interest and extension of them to others with secular justice and moral benevolence Non-dualism is the spiritual principle according to which such altruistic extension can be possible It affords an intimate and internal basis for altruism, without which ethical altruism will remain a disguised and enlightened egoism. It is only by earnest and intimate non-duality that ethical altruism can acquire a genuine spiritual dimension and can bestow delight upon agents of altruism and beneficiaries of it. Cultural joy of common good and cooperative beauty of common festivities also can be only thus ensured The aesthetic dimension of cultural symbolism alongwith the religious dimension of sanctity, can make the spiritual integration of secular values, as intended by the Isha Upanishad, more complete. Such a comprehensive and profound qualitative elevation of secular values alone can secure the spiritual transvaluation of secular values which in themselves are strictly natural, determinate and individulistic Upanishads mark the highest effort of human mind in the direction of affording a philosophical basis and cultural discipline for such transvaluation of secular values The Indian tradition of living culture represents the supreme success of social aspira-

tion in the direction of achieving a comprehensive synthesis of secular values with transcendental spirituality in concrete social life Both these achievements of Indian genius are most remarkable in the history of human race and are veritable miracles of Indian mind

Food, Sex, Wealth and action are main among secular values. All these can be spiritualized only through restraint and contentment which characterize moral discipline. Food, Wealth and action, which are egoistic in nature, become ethical and spiritual through altruism The Bhagwadgita ensures this transvaluation of food and wealth through a religious schematism[7] and that of action through its well known philosophy of Karmayoga. Indications of the former are found in the first verse of the Isha Upanishad and of the second in the second verse of it Charity and service are common religious modes of this transvaluation of secular values of food, wealth and action.

Sex is a unique secular value. As sensory and egoistic it is natural and determinate. It has an impelling force and is largely egoistic But it is not completely so. It is mutual and thus tends to transcend strict duality. The incholate and implicit non-duality of sex has served as the basis of all social and cultural development of human life Love is the divine gift of this sexual nonduality It has inspired the divination of sex and its spiritual approximations exemplified in the myths of Shiva-Parvati, Vishnu-Lakshmi etc and contemplations of sexual metaphysics in the Shaiva tradition of Indian Philosophy Maternity and its religious elevation has contributed to approximation of sex to spirituality in its positive enjoyment and also in its negative abstenance and transcendence. The latter is traditionalized in Brahmacharya and cultural exaltation of sororal relationship

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7 देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः । गीता ३-११
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायै भ्योयो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः । गीता ३-१२

Feasting and other ceremonial customs that prevail in the socio-cultural tradition of India, inspire an easy and effective spiritual transvaluation of material values through cultural modes

Thus the material and secular values of life acquire an ethical dimension of altruism through cultural modes and are elevated towards spiritual transvaluation Sex transcends the natural sensationalism through its implicit non-dualism and its further elevation through love and mysticism, reinforced by religious sanctity and mythical metaphysics Social contact of secular values introduced and developed by implicit non-dualism of sex troduced and developed by implicit non-dualism of human sex and human maternity, promotes ethical altruism in secular values Social and ethical transvaluation of secular values and spiritual transvaluation of the former through deeper non-duality leads the spiritual process of life towards greater comprehensiveness and completion Spiritual delight is the Supreme mark of this spiritualization Unique and enduring delight is revealed in greater and greter excellence in this advancing process of spiritual transvaluation of values Delight, secured through non-duality, affective intimacy, moral earnestness and cultural creativity, marks the culmination of spiritual process of concrete life and wholesome fulfilment of it Such concrete and comprehensive spiritual transvaluation of values can, besides embodying highest fulfilment of concrete human life, serve as an intelligible assurance of the supreme transcendental spiritual experience which is affirmed in the Upanishads as the ultimate goal of life and is understood to constitute the summum bonum (Nishreyes) or the Supreme Good of life



# A REQUEST TO SCHOLARS

The author requests Scholars of Philosophy and other readers interested in Indian Philosophy in general and in the Philosophy of Upanishada in particular to enlighten him by their opinion about and criticism of the views expressed in this book and also to benefit him by their suggestions for revising his views The author will be grateful to them for encouraging opinions, sympathetic appreciations as well as for illuminating criticism

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